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MINIATURE  
PORTRAITS

71

TRANSLATED BY HAMISH MILES  
FROM THE HISTORIETTES OF  
TALLEMANT DES RÉAUX  
1619 - 1692

MINIATURE  
PORTRAITS BY  
GÉDÉON TALLEMANT  
SIEVR DES RÉAVX



~~1552~~ **B**

GUY CHAPMAN  
MCMXXV





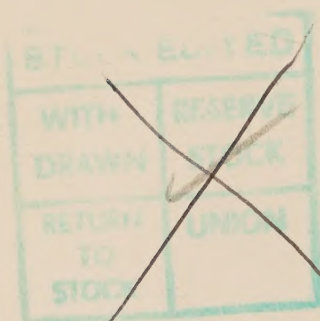
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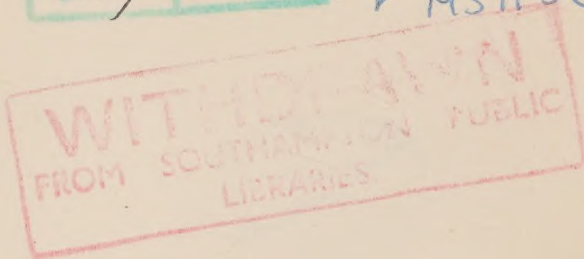
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*The initial letters employed at the opening of chapters  
were designed by Robert Estienne (I)  
1499-1550, Imprimeur du Roi*

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE present selection from the *Historiettes* of Tallemant des Réaux is frankly designed for those persons who may be pleased to accept Doctor Johnson's appellation of "the common reader."

The twenty-odd miniature biographies here presented have been chosen rather to give entertainment to this common reader (we call him usually the "general" reader nowadays) than to provide material for historical meditations or study. The methodical student of the politics and morals of France in the seventeenth century will turn, of course, to the ampler spaces of the original, embellished with the magnificent critical apparatus of Monmerqué. There he will find that the full catalogue of Tallemant's portrait-gallery contains the names of nearly five hundred sitters, and that in his review of his age no fewer than six thousand different personages are mentioned, with greater or less detail. These examples, however, may please the taste, and stimulate the curiosity, of many whom the nine substantial volumes of the complete *Historiettes* might at first sight appal.

Most general readers are familiar enough with the outlines of French history during the period which Tallemant des Réaux covers; it is the France of Henry of Navarre, Marie de' Medici, Louis XIII, Richelieu, Cinq-Mars, and the *salon* of Madame de Rambouillet. A few bare notes at the end of this volume will serve them as reminders, with dates (which our present biographer seldom mentions), of the principal characters of the time. But a few words ought first to be said of Tallemant himself, and of his place among the great French memoir-writers—for to them he certainly belongs.

Gédéon Tallemant was born at La Rochelle in 1619. His birthplace is significant, for he came of a Protestant family who had left their ancestral home in Tournai under persecution nearly sixty years earlier. The Tallemants were prosperous and well-established *bourgeois*, a family resting on a sound basis of banking, commerce, and landed property acquired with the succeeding years. Pierre Tallemant, the biographer's father, opened a bank of some importance at Bordeaux about 1623, and eleven years later took up his residence for good in Paris itself.

And for Gédéon, Paris was the natural habitat. He had a passion for society, diversions, verse-making, the amenities of his century in general. There was a tour, according to custom, in Italy in 1638 (whereof he tells in his *Historiette* of the Cardinal de Retz), but once returned to Paris, Gédéon plunged fully into the life that there lay before him. He read for the law, but was more diligent in the practice of the social accomplishments; with verses and letters of gallantry he was prodigal; and it ended in his preferring marriage with a charming cousin, who had a handsome dowry, to the harassing demands of the legal career which his father sought to force on him. This marriage with Elizabeth de Rambouillet took place in 1646, the bride being fifteen years of age.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Despite his constant social activities, his entertaining, his collecting of books and furniture and so forth, Gédéon found time, and had the wit, to improve his finances and his status, for in 1651 he carried out successful negotiations for certain fine landed properties in Touraine and Anjou, and before long he was entitled by letters royal to style himself *Sieur des Réaux*. This was all to the good. With a sound social standing, he could certainly pursue his life in Paris with more freedom and more opportunities. And the great period of his life begins when he becomes a favoured guest at the Hôtel de Rambouillet itself. After this he seems to come into touch, sooner or later, with almost every side of Parisian society. M. Magne, the supreme authority on Tallemant, as indeed on much else of this period, has summarised the extent of his relations in these words :—

“ From a tender age he had been the intimate friend of Conrart, as indeed of all the more noteworthy among the Protestants, and particularly of the Rohans. Through the advocate Patru he could have light upon the world of the Palace of Justice, and through d’Ablancourt on that of the pedants, where d’Aubignac, Ménage, Costar were shining. The Academy, into which his brother François and his cousin Paul had entered, had no secrets for him. Through Bois-Robert, whom he knew particularly well, he could assemble valuable information concerning Cardinal Richelieu, his kinsmen and his familiars. At the house of Mme. de Gondran he met the Sévigné, and at that of his brother-in-law, Antoine de la Sablière, he met La Fontaine. The actor Mondory, who was received at Madame de Rambouillet’s, enabled him to penetrate the motley company of the players. . . . Ninon de l’Enclos, after 1680, admitted him to her philosophising circle, and he was the confidant of her meditations on the existence of God. Indeed, his own family itself, extremely numerous, and allied with all the finance of the epoch, holding important offices in the Royal household or in the Parliament, opened to him the houses of the great bourgeois families, generally closed to the merely curious. It can be said that there was nobody of any worth, living in the first half of the sixteenth century, who remained unknown to him.”

So it is small wonder that Tallemant’s portraits of his time should be so numerous or so interesting. He was drawing near to forty years of age when he began to write them. And he must have written with something of the self-contained energy of Pepys himself, for he cannot have hoped to publish such studies while he still lived. But he made no secret of his activity, and the world was not slow to carry its tales and gossip round to him. His manuscript books are heavily amplified and elaborated, the strata of information accumulating with the years. He worked simultaneously, as he mentions repeatedly in the *Historiettes*, on a history of the Regency of Anne of Austria. But this work, if it was ever completed, has not survived.

The *Historiettes* survived in manuscript, but were not printed until 1833.



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Their appearance was the signal for a furious storm in learned circles, for the seventeenth century, as presented by such historians as Victor Cousin, had gathered to itself the legend of an ideal and heroic age, and all its most representative characters were sacrosanct. In breaks Tallemant ! Kings are shown in alarming undress, Queens hardly less so, Cardinals become men, and the great courtesans turn rather plain. . . . Small wonder that the cry of " An imposture ! " was raised, and Cousin himself, over thirty years later, went to his grave still convinced, it has been said, that the world had been hoodwinked.

But to return to Tallemant : he had to face a costly law-suit in 1681, respecting certain rights in an edition which he had prepared of the works of Voiture. In this he was unsuccessful. But other misfortunes darkened his later years. His family was involved in a serious financial disaster, and he himself was brought face to face with the religious troubles of the time. The Protestantism of most of the Tallemants did not withstand the double pressure of social exigencies and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes : his own wife had been one of the first to turn to the Catholic faith, in 1665. He himself wavered a long time—although his convictions seem to have been hereditary rather than heartfelt—and yielded finally to the arguments of the Jesuit Father Rapin in 1685. But his daughter Charlotte refused apostasy, and had to flee to England ; and others of the family were also exiled or imprisoned. Lonely and somewhat saddened, but still active in mind, he died in Paris on November 10th, 1692.

*Hamish Miles.*



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# MINIATURE PORTRAITS





## THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

1657

I CALL this collection *Historiettes*, because it is made up of short memoirs only, with nothing to link one with the others. In a fashion, I observe the sequence of time, not to make a confusion. My design is to write down all that I have learnt, and shall learn, that is pleasing and worthy of note, and I propose to say both good and ill without hiding the truth, and without using what is to be found in Histories and Memoirs already printed. This I do the more freely since I know well that they are not matters to be put into the light, although perhaps they may none the less be useful. I give this to my friends who have been asking it of me for a long while.

For the rest, I shall often relegate matter to the Memoirs which I propose to compile of the regency of Anne of Austria, or, more accurately, of the administration of Cardinal Mazarin, which I shall continue so long as his rule lasts, if I find myself able to do so. These relegations will be to avoid repeating the same matter; for instance, where M. de Chamot, who became the Duc de Rohan, enters into negotiations with the Court, I cannot continue further his *Historiette*, as from that point the story is that of the siege of Paris.

Such is my design. I shall start with Henry the Great and his Court, in order to begin with something illustrious.

*N.B.—Footnotes marked [T.] are those of Tallemant ;  
the others are those of the translator.*



## HENRY IV



IF this prince had been born King of France, and peaceable to boot, he would probably have cut no great figure. He would have drowned himself in the delights of the flesh, for never did he cease, in spite of all obstacles, to abandon the most pressing business in the pursuit of his pleasures. After the battle of Coutras, instead of following up his advantage, off he went to sport with the Comtesse de Guiche, taking to her the standards he had captured. During the siege of Amiens, again, he ran off after Madame de Beaufort, without troubling his head about the cardinal of Austria, later the Archduke Albert, who was advancing to attempt a relief of the fortress.

He was not too liberal, nor particularly grateful. He never had a word of praise for others, and used to boast about himself like a Gascon. But to make up for that, no prince was ever known more humane, none who better loved his people; in nowise did he omit to watch over the good of the realm. And in several encounters he showed that he had a lively wit and that he could understand a joke.

But, to go back to his love-affairs: if Sébastien Zamet, as some have claimed, administered poison to Madame de Beaufort, he was assuredly doing a great service to Henry IV, for this worthy prince was on the point of taking the most foolhardy step that could possibly be taken. Yet he had made up his mind to it. The late Monsieur le Prince was to have been declared a bastard. The Comte de Soissons made himself cardinal, and was given three hundred thousand crowns income in benefices. The Prince de Conti was then married to a lady too old to bear children. The Marshal de Biron was to marry the daughter of Madame d'Éstrées, who has since become Madame de Sanzay. M. d'Éstrées had to acknowledge her; she was born in wed-

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lock; but for five or six years M. d'Estrées had not lain with his wife, who had gone away with the Marquis d'Allègre; indeed she was killed with him at Issoire, by the inhabitants, who rebelled and sided with the League. The marquis and his lover stood firm for the King; they were both stabbed and thrown from the window.

This Madame d'Estrées was sprung from the La Bourdaisière family, a stock more prolific in gallant ladies than any that ever was in France. (It is said that a certain Mme de la Bourdaisière boasted of having lain with Pope Clement VII, and, at Nice, with the Emperor Charles V when he came into France, and with Francis I.) As many as twenty-five or twenty-six can be counted, either nuns or married women, who have all loved in high places. Whence comes the saying, that the arms of La Bourdaisière are *a handful of vetches*, for it happens by an amusing chance that in their arms is a hand sowing vetches.<sup>1</sup>

Here is the story I have heard from people who knew it for true, or believed it to be so. A certain widow at Bourges, the first wife of an attorney or a notary, bought a wretched doublet at the old clothes market. In the skirt of it she found a paper on which was written: "In the cellar of such-and-such a house, six feet beneath the surface, at such-and-such a spot (which was clearly designated), there is so much gold in some vessels, etc." The sum was a very great one for the time (this was quite a century and a half ago). This widow, remarking that the lieutenant-general of the town was a widower and childless, told him of the matter, without pointing out the particular house, and offered to tell him the secret on condition that he married her. He consented; the treasure was discovered; he kept his word and married her. His name was Babon. He purchased La Bourdaisière. He was, I think, the grandfather of the Marshal d'Estrées' mother.

Madame d'Estrées had six daughters and two sons, of whom one is the Marshal d'Estrées, who is still alive to-day. These six daughters were—Mme de Beaufort, of whom Mme de Sourdis, also of La Bourdaisière, took charge, Mme de Villars, of whom more anon, Mme de Namps, the Comtesse de Sanzay, the Abbess de Maubuisson, and Mme de Balagny. It was by the last-named that the late M. d'Épernon had as daughter the Abbess of Ste Glassine de Metz. The six of them, with their brother, used to be called the Seven Deadly Sins. Madame de Neufvic, a lady of wit, and very intimate with Mme



## HENRY IV

de Bar, composed this epigram on the death of Mme de Beaufort:

*J'ai vu passer par ma fenêtre,  
Les six péchés mortels vivants,  
Conduits par le bastard d'un prêtre,  
Qui tout ensemble allaient chantant  
Un requiescat in pace  
Pour le septième trépassé.*

Henry IV, it is asserted, was not alone in her favours, and it was for that reason that he did not give M. de Vendôme the name of Alexander, from a fear lest he might be called Alexander *the Great*, for M. de Bellegarde was spoken of as "the Great," and apparently he had passed that way the first. Ten times the King gave orders for him to be killed, and then repented of it when he reflected that he had taken her from M. de Bellegarde; for Henry, seeing him and Mlle d'Estrées dancing together, said: "They must be the servant and the mistress." One day M. de Praslin, captain of the bodyguard, later Marshal of France since the Regency, in order to prevent the King from marrying Mme de Beaufort, offered him to let him surprise Bellegarde abed with her. In fact, he had the King roused one night at Fontainebleau, but when he had to enter the Duchess' chamber, the King said: "Ah! that would offend her too much!" The Marshal de Praslin told this to a gentleman from whom I have it.

The mistresses of Henry IV made up a wonderful number in all. But he was, as the phrase went, "no great tree-feller." Also, he was for ever being cuckolded. They would say, in jest over this, that the King's second had been slain. Mme de Verneuil called him once "Captain Will-for-deed." And another time (for she used to scold him cruelly) she told him that he was lucky to be King, that except for that he would be insufferable, and that he stank like carrion. . . .

Nobody, I think, approved the conduct of Henry IV with the late Queen-Mother on the score of his mistresses; for Mme de Verneuil was lodged at the Hôtel de la Force, so near the Louvre, and he allowed the court to be to some extent divided for her; and in that there was certainly neither policy nor seemliness. This Mme de Verneuil was a daughter of that M. d'Enragues who married Marie Touchet, daughter of a baker at Orléans, who had been a mistress of Charles IX. She was a woman of spirit, but proud, and had but little respect

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either for the Queen or for the King. In speaking to him of the Queen, she would refer to her sometimes as "your stout banker," and when the King asked her once what she would have done if she had been at the quay of Neuilly when the Queen sought to drown herself there, she told him, "I would have cried 'Her Majesty drinks!'"

At last the King broke with Mme de Verneuil. She flung herself into a life worthy of Sardanapalus or Vitellius, thinking of nothing but victuals and stews, and wanting to have her stew-pot in her chamber. She grew so fat as to be monstrous; but she always kept her liveliness. Few people visited her. Her children were taken from her; her daughter was reared along with the King's lawful daughters.

The late Queen-Mother, for her part, was not very happy in her life with the King. She nagged at him on every occasion. One day when he was whipping M. the Dauphin, she said to him, "Ah! you wouldn't treat your bastards like that!" "As for my bastards," he answered, "the Dauphin can thrash them if they play the fool, but *he'll* have nobody to thrash *him*."

I have heard it said that he himself thrashed the Dauphin twice: the first time, for having harboured so great a hatred for a certain gentleman that, to satisfy himself, he must needs fire a blank charge from a pistol at this gentleman, to make pretence of killing him; and the second, on seeing a sparrow's head that had been crushed. And it was said that, when the Queen-Mother scolded him, the King replied, "Madame, pray to God that my life is spared; for he will ill-treat you if I am no longer here."

There are some who have suspected the Queen-Mother of being concerned in his death, and that for this reason the deposition of Ravaillac has never been brought to light. It is quite certain that, one day when Concini, later the Marshal d'Ancre, came to greet him at Marceau, the King said: "If I were dead, that man would be the ruin of my kingdom."

Those who have wanted to know the inmost history of the death of Henry IV, declare that the interrogation of Ravaillac was made by the president Jeannin, as a councillor of state (he had been president of the parliament of Grenoble), and that the Queen-Mother had selected him as her own man. And it was said that the Comant woman (who asserted the implication of the Duc d'Épernon and the Marquise de Verneuil in the King's murder) stuck to her story to the end.

All that has been given out of Ravaillac's declaration is

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that, seeing that the King was about to undertake a great war, and that his realm would suffer for it, he had thought to do his country a great service, by ridding it of a prince who did not desire to keep it at peace and was not a good Catholic. This Ravaillac had a red beard, and hair with just a streak of gold in it. He was an idle kind of fellow, noticeable only because he dressed in a Flemish rather than a French style. He always dangled a sword behind him, and was of a melancholy turn, but quite agreeable in converse.

Henry IV had a quick wit, and he was humane, as I have said. I shall set down a few instances.

At La Rochelle, a rumour spread among the populace that a certain chandler possessed some mandragora, for magical ends; well, this is a common accusation against those who are doing well in their business. The King, at that time only King of Navarre, sent someone at midnight to the man's house to ask to buy a candle. The chandler duly got out of bed and supplied him with one. "There!" said the King next day, "there's your mandragora! This fellow loses no chance of making a deal, and that's the way to grow rich!"

Once a gentleman-in-waiting, instead of drinking the trial draught which is put in the cover of the King's glass, absent-mindedly drank what was in the glass itself. The King merely said to him: "So-and-so, you might at least have drunk to my health: I should have pledged you in return."

He was informed that the late M. de Guise was in love with Mme de Verneuil, but he was in no way concerned, and said: "They must be left bread and wenches: so much else has been taken from them!"

When he came to bestow the chain of office on M. de La Vieuville, father of the one whom we have twice seen as head of the treasury, La Vieuville said to him, as it is usual to do: "*Domine, non sum dignus.*" "I know quite well," said the King, "I know quite well; but my nephew asked it of me." This nephew was M. de Nevers, later Duke of Mantua, to whom La Vieuville, a plain gentleman, had been chief steward. La Vieuville told the story himself, from fear perhaps that someone else might, for he was no fool, and had some reputation for his witty sayings. They say that La Vieuville, having joked at some brave fellow of the court, was waited on with a challenge from the latter, and that the bearer of the summons added that it would be for six o'clock the next morning. "At six o'clock?" answered La Vieuville. "I don't rise so early in the morning for my own



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business; I should be a pretty fool to do so for that of your friend." The bearer could get nothing more out of him. Whereupon La Vieuville went off to be the first to tell the story at the Louvre; and, because the laughers sided with him, the other was held up to ridicule.

On the occasion of certain taxes being levied from the bankers: "Ah!" he said, "those who are mulcted will help me no more!"

He used to banquet with M. de Bellegarde, the Marshal de Roquelaure, and others, at the house of Zamet, and elsewhere. (Zamet, asked by a notary for his rank and title, said: "Put down Lord Eighteen-hundred-thousand Crowns.") When it came to the marshal, he said to the King that he did not know where to entertain them, except at the "Three Moors." The King went there. The other two took one page between them, and the King one for himself only. "For," said he, "a page from my chamber will be willing to serve only myself." This page was M. de Racan, from whom we have such fine poems.

One day he went to the house of the Princess de Condé, widow of the deformed Prince de Condé. There he found a lute, on the back of which were these two lines:

*Absent de ma divinité,  
Je ne vois rien qui me contente.*

He added these:

*C'est fort mal connaître ma tante,  
Elle aime trop l'humanité.*

The good lady had been very gallant. She was from Longueville.

One night, before the entry into Paris, he was sleeping very ill, and could not make resolve to yield his religion. Crillon said to him: "In Heaven's name, sire, you must be jesting, to make difficulties over accepting a faith which gives you a crown." Crillon, none the less, was a good Christian, for praying one day before a crucifix, he suddenly began crying out: "O Lord! Had I been there, they would never have crucified Thee!" Nay, I think he even took his sword in his hand, like Clovis and his nobles at the sermon of Saint Remigius. This same Crillon, when he was being shown how to dance, was told, "Now stoop—now step back." "I'll have none of it," he cried. "A Crillon never stooped, and never stepped back!" When

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he was an officer of the regiment of guards, he refused to slay M. de Guise. The younger M. de Guise, being governor of Provence, had the idea of having a false alarm raised, and came to him, saying: "The enemy have retaken the town!" But Crillon did not ruffle a hair. "Forward," he said. "We must die like men of mettle!" Afterwards, M. de Guise confessed that he had played this trick to see if it were true that Crillon never knew fear. Crillon replied firmly to him: "Young man, if I had chanced to show the slightest weakness, I should have stabbed you dead."

When M. du Perron, at that time Bishop of Évreux, was instructing the King, he wished to speak to him concerning Purgatory. "Leave that alone," said the King. "That is bread for monks."

And this reminds me of a certain physician of M. de Créquy, who, being at the embassy of his master in Rome, was asked by someone at the Vatican where the Pope's kitchen might be. "'Tis Purgatory," said he, laughing. They wished to bring him before the Inquisition, but did not dare when they knew whose servant he was.

Harlequin and his troupe came to Paris about that same time and went to visit the King. Harlequin was a very lively fellow, and took his own time about things, so that when His Majesty rose from his chair, he slipped into it and addressed the King as if the latter had been Harlequin. "Well, Harlequin," he said to Henry, "you have come hither with your troupe for my diversion. I am very glad of it, and I give you my word for my protection and for a pension of such-and-such." The King did not dare to disavow these words. "Hold on!" he answered, "you have been acting my part long enough: let me play it for myself now!"

This reminds me of a story from England. My Lord Montagu was dissatisfied with his treatment by King James, and one day when a Scottish gentleman, whom the King had several times avoided, came to ask a reward of him, he said to James: "Sire, you cannot escape again. This man does not know you at all; I am of your build; so I shall feign to be his sovereign. Do you stand behind me." The Scotsman delivered his speech, and Montagu made answer: "You must not be surprised that I have not yet done anything for you. Here is Montagu, who has rendered me so many services: but I have done nothing for him!" King James caught the joke, and said: "Get you away from there! You have played long enough!"

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Henry IV recognised that to destroy Paris would, as the phrase goes, be cutting off his nose to spite his face. Wherein he was wiser than his predecessor, who used to say that Paris had a swollen head, and that it had best be smashed in. Nevertheless, Henry IV wished, in case of need, to have a means of quitting Paris without being seen, and to this end he had the gallery of the Louvre built, which is no part of the design of the edifice; thereby he might reach the Tuileries, which have only been within the circle of the walls for the past twenty or twenty-five years. At that time M. de Nevers was having the Hôtel de Nevers constructed. This the King held to be rather too magnificent to be just over against the Louvre, and talking one day with M. de Nevers, he pointed to his buildings. "Well, nephew," he said, "when your house is finished, I shall come to live with you." This remark of the King's, and also, perhaps, a scarcity of money, stopped the work short.

One day he discovered numerous grey hairs in his head. "In truth," he said, "it must be the speeches delivered to me since my accession that have made me turn white like this."

Seeing his sister, later Mme de Bar, in an abstracted mood, he said to her: "Well, sister, what are you turning over in your head that makes you sad? We have every reason to praise God: our affairs are surely as prosperous as they could be." "Yes," she answered, "according to *your* count—but not by *mine*." 2

Once she had a ballet performed wherein the figures of the dance formed the letters of the King's name. "Well, sire," she said to him afterwards, "did you notice how these figures made up all the letters of Your Majesty's name?" "Ah, sister," said he, "either you don't write very clearly, or else we do not read very well: no one noticed what you tell me!"

Talking of the Comte de Soissons, I have heard it said that when he was escaping from Nantes, led by a laundryman whose boy he pretended to be, he was on the point of knocking into M. de Mercœur, who happened to be passing in the street (for he was always a bad walker). But the laundryman gave him a sharp cuff, saying: "Mind what you're doing, you clumsy lout!"

The day that Henry IV entered Paris, he went to see his aunt, Mme de Montpensier, and asked her for some preserves. "I think," said she, "you are doing that to mock me. You imagine we have none left." "No," he answered, "the fact is, I'm hungry." She had a jar of apricots brought, and taking some she was going to make trial of them. But he stopped her,



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saying: "Aunt, you do not think——" "What?" she replied, "have I not done enough to be suspect to you?" "You are in no way suspect, aunt." "Ah," she answered, "one must be your servant." And, as it turned out, she afterwards did serve him with great affection.

Brave as he was, it is said that whenever they came to tell him, "Here are the enemy," he was always seized with a kind of diarrhœa. But he used to turn it to a joke, and say: "I must off and do 'em good!" He was a born thief; he could not prevent himself from taking things that he came across, but he would restore them. He said that if he had not been King, he would have been hanged.

As for his person, he had not a very commanding air. Mme de Simier, who was accustomed to seeing Henry III, said, when she saw Henry IV, "I have seen the King, but not his *majesty*."

At Fontainebleau there is a notable memorial of the kind-heartedness of this prince. In one of the gardens there can be seen a house, which projects into it and makes a bend. The truth is that a private person was never willing to sell it to the King, although he would have paid much more than it was worth. But the King refused to do him wrong.

When he saw a broken-down house, he used to say: "This must either belong to me, or the Church!"

<sup>1</sup> *Vesce*, vetch, was at the time used for a woman of light virtue.

<sup>2</sup> A play on the word *count*. Madame's hand had been sought in marriage by the Comte de Soissons, but Henry always declined to sanction the match.

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It has been said, and there is support for it, that he came of a Scottish family named Bethune, and not of the house of the counts of Béthune in Flanders. There was a Scottish archbishop of Glasgow whom he regarded as a kinsman. He was going to offer himself to the Guises against the Comte de Soissons, seeing himself an ally of the house of Guise through that of Coucy, sprung, he said, from the ancient house of Austria, as if he deemed it a dishonour to be kinsman of the Emperor and the King of Spain. But King Henry III sent him word by M. du Maurier, the Huguenot, later ambassador in Holland, that he would be humiliating him; that he would make him see that the house of Guise would be none the better for having his support; that, having been raised up by him from nothing, he was showing black ingratitude, to go and offer himself against a prince of the blood to those who had sought to take his benefactor's crown and life. M. du Maurier did not say half of what the King had charged him to say; yet my man was so downcast that he was pitiable, for, even as he was insolent in prosperity, so in adversity he was cowardly and feeble-hearted.

He boasted of having caused the governance of Provence to be given to the late M. de Guise, and M. the Chancellor de Chiverny protested against that. He blames M. d'O, who nevertheless had clean hands and, instead of growing rich in his office as treasurer-general, lived therein on his own wealth.

He passes over M. de Sancy, as if he had not been in charge of the exchequer at all. M. de Sancy was dismissed in the following circumstances: at the siege of Amiens, when asked by the King for advice as to his marriage with Mme de Beaufort, he said, in presence of M. de Montpensier, that "wench against wench, he would prefer the daughter of Henry II to that of Mme d'Estrées, who died in a brothel." Also, he said to Mme de

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Beaufort herself, who was telling of a gentleman, a neighbour of hers, who had put his children under the stove on marrying the lady by whom he had had them, that "that was very well for an inheritance of five or six thousand *livres* income, but that for a kingdom she would never get to the end of it, and that a bastard would always be a whoreson." A somewhat rude speech, in truth; but the King ought to have remembered that M. de Sancy was a man of mettle and had rendered him great services.

He had, indeed, hired at his own expense the Swiss troops whom he brought in great numbers to Henry IV. He died poor, with a protection against creditors in his pocket. More than once it was his lot to be arrested by the bailiffs; he allowed them to take him right to the prison gates, and then would show them his protection, and make game of them.

He had a son who was a page-in-waiting on Henry IV. Tired of bearing the torch on foot, he found means to have a nag, but the King got to know and had him whipped. He used always to swear *par la mort!* So he was called *Palamort*. A pleasing enough man. Once he came upon Mme de Guéménée on the Orléans road, on her way to Paris. He was tired of being on horseback, for it was wretched weather, so he said to her: "Madame, there are robbers about in the valley of Torfou; I offer myself as escort." "My thanks to you," she answered. "Ah, madame," said he, "it will never be said that I abandoned you in necessity." And as he said it he lowered the step and, not heeding what she said, installed himself in her coach. One day at Rome, when M. de Brissac was ambassador there, his lady was expected to go to see the vine of the Medici; Palamort placed himself quite naked in a niche where there was no statue, in a gallery there which is full of them. This man became a Father of the Oratory; Father Palamort, they called him. In his chamber he had none but knightly saints, such as St Maurice, St Martin, and others.

M. de Sancy's other son, who was an ambassador in Turkey, also became an Oratorian.

Mme de Beaufort was impatient to have M. de Rosny put in the place of M. de Sancy. He had paid court to her, long ago. His first employment was the control of passports at the siege of Amiens, and then he was despatched to collect all the tax payments due from the collectors, which he did with great strictness. This quality he used in all his dealings. As he was rather ignorant of finance, he took with him a certain Angel Cappel,

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seigneur of Luat, a kind of madman of letters, who long after, to flatter M. de Sully, caused to be printed a little book entitled *The Confidant*, which greatly enraged M. de Lesdiguières. Du Luat was put into prison for it, and when they sought to question him and said, "Will you promise to speak the truth?" he answered, "I shall be mighty careful not to: here I am, in trouble for doing just that!" He gave very harmful counsels, and used to say, amongst other follies, that what France needed for her restoration was just an *almond cream*.<sup>2</sup> He caused to be printed a book of his sage opinions, in the frontispiece of which he was depicted as an Angel, with wings and a bearded chin, and some verses which said that there was nothing human about him save his beard.

M. d'Incarville, controller-general of finance, was no thief, as M. de Sully avers. He was an honourable man and a man of wealth. The quarrel with Mme de Beaufort when she was about to become queen scarcely accords with what M. de Sully tells of the journey from Clermont, when he thrashed the coachman by his command; she would have had him sent packing very quickly.

Here is what happened on the illness of Mme de Beaufort. She sent off Puypeiroux posthaste to the King to tell him the news, and beg him to approve that she should embark to come and join him at Fontainebleau. She hoped that that would make him come immediately, and that, for the sake of her children, he would marry her before she died. And indeed, as soon as Puypeiroux arrived, the King sent him off again to go and have the ferry at the Tuileries held in readiness, by which he wanted to pass over without being seen. Then, all impatient, he mounted his horse and rode at such speed that he overtook Puypeiroux, whom he upbraided terribly. Near Juvisy the King came upon the Chancellor, M. de Bellièvre, who acquainted him with the death of the Duchess. None the less the King was eager to go on to Paris to see her in death, had not the Chancellor represented to him that it was an action unbecoming with a King's dignity. He allowed these reasonings to persuade him, and turned back to Fontainebleau.

When the King made M. de Sully the head of his treasury, the latter, in his grand way, drew up an inventory of his wealth,



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which he gave to His Majesty, vowing that he wished to live solely on his salary and to profit from the saving of his own income, which was derived at that time only from his property of Rosny. But immediately he set about making extensive acquisitions, and every one laughed at his noble inventory. The King showed clearly enough what he thought of him, for when M. de Sully stumbled one day in the courtyard of the Louvre, wishing to salute the King, who was on a balcony, His Majesty remarked to the bystanders that they need not be astonished, and that "if the stoutest fellow of his Swiss guards had taken as much *meed* as that gentleman, he'd have tumbled headlong!"

Never was there a more forbidding head of the treasury. One afternoon he was waited upon at the Arsenal by five or six of the most eminently-placed gentlemen of the Court, amongst those who enjoyed the highest favour of the King. They declared on entering that they were come only to see him. "A very easy matter," said he, and turned himself back and front-wise to let himself be seen, went into his private room, and shut the door behind him.

A treasurer of France, Pradel by name, formerly steward of the old Marshal de Biron, and well known to the King, could not get satisfaction from M. de Sully, who withheld his salary from him. One day he wanted to have Pradel removed by force from his presence, but the latter seized a knife from the table, where a meal was set, and said: "You shall have my life first. I am in the house of the King, and justice is my due." In the end, after much stir, Pradel went to find the King, told him the story, and declared that in the despair to which M. de Sully had brought him, he would not mind being hanged, provided he were avenged, and that he would die of hunger anyway. The King rebuked him sternly, but, despite the complaints of M. de Sully, Pradel was paid.

An Italian, on his way from the Arsenal, where he had suffered some rebuffs from the head of the treasury, passed by the Grève, where some malefactors were being hanged. "Ah, happy gallows-birds!" he exclaimed. "You've no dealings with that Rosny!"

He was so much hated that people cut down the elm-trees which he had caused to be planted along the main roads to adorn

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them. "It's a *Rosny*," they would say. "Let's make a *Biron* of it!"<sup>3</sup> He had proposed to the King, who loved such institutions, that private individuals should plant trees alongside the roads; and when he saw that this was not successful, he was the first to laugh at it.

M. de Sully says somewhere in his *Memoirs* that M. de Biron, and twelve of the most gallant gentlemen of the Court, were not able to carry through a ballet which they had undertaken, and that the King had had to order him, Sully, to apply himself to it. Dancing was one of his weaknesses. Every evening, until the death of Henry IV, a certain La Roche, valet to the King, used to play the dances of the day on the lute, and M. de Sully would dance all alone with some sort of extravagant hat on his head, which he was used to wear in his private room. The spectators of this were Duret, later president of Chévrý, and La Clavelle, later seigneur of Chevigny, who, with a few women of rather bad name, used to play the fool with him every day. These persons applauded him, though he was the clumsiest fellow in the world. He used sometimes to mount on horseback in the courtyard of the Arsenal, but so gracelessly that every one laughed at him.

Monsieur le Prince danced a ballet once, and the King commanded M. de Sully to give an order for payment for this entertainment. M. de Sully was furious, and added underneath, in mockery, "And a like sum for the broiderer." To infuriate him further, Monsieur le Prince got himself a double payment, by saying that it was half for the broiderer. He proceeded with all his followers to M. d'Arbault, treasurer of the *Épargne*, and only came away when he had received the money. The King only laughed, and said that M. de Sully deserved what he'd got.

Sully himself kept the door of the hall with double galleries which he had caused to be built at the Arsenal for ballets.

In his speech, he was the foulest man in the world. One day some gentleman or other, very handsome in appearance, came to dine with him. Mme de Sully, his second wife, who is still alive, was gazing at him as hard as she could. "Confess, madame," said he out loud, "confess that you'd be prettily trapped if our friend turned out to have no ——." He had a separate staircase built leading to his wife's apartment, and said to her: "Madame, make them (you know whom I mean) pass in by that staircase; for if ever I meet someone on mine, I'll make him jump all the steps of it!"



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This good man, more than five-and-twenty years after every one had ceased to wear chains and diamond stars, used to deck himself out in them every single day, and walked in this get-up under the covered ways of the Place Royale, which is near his house. All the passers-by were amused by the sight. At Sully itself, where he retired towards the end of his days, he kept fifteen or twenty aged peacocks and seven or eight decayed old gentlemen who, at the sound of the bell, ranged themselves in a row to do him reverence when he went for a walk, and then followed up behind him. He maintained some sort of Swiss guard. He used to say that there was salvation for a man in any kind of religion, and wished to be buried in consecrated ground.

<sup>1</sup> Most of this I have taken from a manuscript compiled by the late M. Marbault, formerly Secretary of M. Duplessis-Mornay, on the Memoirs of M. de Sully, in which he shows the almost complete falsity of these as to matters bearing on the author. From these writings I have extracted what no one would dare to publish when they come to be printed. [T.]

<sup>2</sup> A play on the word *amende, fine* or *penalty*.

<sup>3</sup> In allusion to the beheading of the Marshal Charles de Biron at the Bastille, 31st July 1602.

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HE marriage of Louis XIII took place when he was still a child.

The King gave his first sign of affection for somebody in the person of his coachman, Saint-Amour. Afterwards he showed kindly feeling for Haran, the keeper of his dogs. When he wished to send someone who could report faithfully on the person of the Spanish princess, he used for this mission his coachman's father, as if it had been for an inspection of dogs.

The grand prior of Vendôme, the Commander de Souvré et Montpouillan-la-Force, a youth of wit and courage, but ugly and red-haired, were sent away one after the other by the Queen-Mother. At last M. de Luynes came, of whom, as of Desplan too, we have spoken elsewhere. Nogent-Bautru, captain of the archers of the gate, was never, properly speaking, a favourite, but he was in the King's especial regard before Cardinal Richelieu became his minister. He lined his purse in that post.

The late King did not lack wit, but, as I have said elsewhere, it inclined to the malicious. He had a hindrance in his speech, and, being shy, this had the result that he acted still less on his own initiative. He was finely built, danced quite well in ballets, but never performed anything but ridiculous parts. He sat a horse well, would have stood fatigue well in case of need, and put an army into battle well.

M. d'Estambon is a bad stammerer, and the King, seeing him for the first time, stammered out some question to him. Naturally, the other answered him in the same way, which surprised the King, as if M. d'Estambon had wanted to make a fool of him. It certainly seemed so, and if the King had not been assured that this gentleman was afflicted with stuttering, he would perhaps have used him ill.

Cardinal Richelieu, who dreaded lest he should get the title of "Louis the Stammerer," was delighted at an opportunity pre-

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sending itself of naming him "Louis the Just." This happened when Mme de Guemadeux, wife of the governor of Fougères, flung herself at his feet, weeping and lamenting, and yet he was not moved, despite her being of great beauty. At La Rochelle the name was confirmed to him, by reason of the treatment of the people of that town. Some have laughingly added the word "bowman," and said, "Louis, the Just Bowman." One day, but long afterwards, Nogent was playing tennis or shuttlecock with the King, and cried out "Yours, Sire!" But the King missed his stroke, and Nogent cried, "Ah! there's a fine Louis the *Just* for you!" The King was not in the least put out by it.

He was somewhat cruel, as are most men of sulky temperament and small courage: for his worthy Majesty was not a man of valour, although he wished to pass for such. At the siege of Montauban, he had not the least pity when he saw a number of Huguenots, of those whom Beaufort had wished to throw into the town, lying in the moat of the castle where he lodged, most of them stricken with terrible wounds. These moats were dry; they were put into them as into a safe keeping-place, and no one ever deigned to give them water. Flies were devouring the poor creatures. But the King found diversion for a long time in mimicking the grimaces of the dying. The Comte de La Rocheguyon (a man who could say things in a very pleasing manner) was in his extremity, and the King sent a gentleman to find out how he was. "Tell the King," said the Comte, "that in a little while he will have his diversion. Only a moment to wait, and I shall be starting my grimaces. Often enough I've helped him to imitate others; now it will be my turn."

When M. le Grand (Cinq-Mars) was condemned, he said: "I'd much like to see the grimace he's making at this moment on that scaffold!"

Sometimes his arguments in council were passable, and it even seemed that he had the advantage over the Cardinal. But perhaps the latter had the sense to give him this small satisfaction. His laxity was his undoing. Pisieux governed for a time, and then La Vieuville, treasurer-general, was more or less minister before the full dominion of Richelieu. La Vieuville had a mind to infuriate every one. He wanted all the ladies who went to speak to him to dance corantes. When asked for money, he used to start moving his arms as if he were swimming, and say, "I'm swimming! I'm swimming! I can't touch bottom!" Scapin went to him once with some request or other, and La Vieuville, as soon as this fellow appeared, started playing the

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zany. Scapin looked at him, and then said: "Sir, you have played my part: now start to play your own." The King, with the conceit to treat him as a horse, made him eat some sweetened hay, and next day made him his treasurer. Which of the two, think you, deserved the more to feed on grass? In the end, when the Marshal d'Ornano placed himself of his own free will in the Bastille in order to justify himself with regard to certain accusations made of him, the rumour ran that La Vieuville was their true cause. The followers of Monsieur angered their master, who grumbled so much that La Vieuville got his dismissal. This happened at Saint-Germain, and when he took his departure on that day, all the scullions were brought out to set up a tremendous shindy with their pots and pans, a salvo of farewell, as they said.

Louis XIII was turned away from the wild parties of Moulinier and de Justine, two of the chapel musicians; they did not serve him any too well, and he had the half of their salaries cut off. But Marais, the royal buffoon, supplied them with a device to have themselves reinstated. They went with him to the evening audience and danced a masquerade only half clothed. The one who had a doublet had no breeches, the breechless no doublet. "What means this?" said the King. "Sire," they answered, "it means that those who are on half-pay are in half-dress likewise." The King laughed at this, and took them back into favour.

On his journey from Lyons, in a little town called Tournus, between Châlons and Mâcon, a certain Franciscan wished to make the Queen-Mother believe that the King, in passing by, had made a dumb girl to speak, by touching her, as if she had had the scrofula. The girl was shown to her, and the good Father said he had seen it, and after him the whole town said so too. Father Souffran arranged for a procession and the singing of chants. The Queen took the good monk, and, joining the King, said to the latter that he ought to pray to God in thanks for the grace vouchsafed to him in thus operating through him so great a miracle. The King said that he knew not what was meant. "Behold the modesty of this good prince!" cried the Franciscan. In the end the King declared that it was a piece of roguery, and wanted to send troops to punish these impostors.

He already loved Mme d'Hautefort, who was still only a maid of the Queen's. Her companions used to say, "You can't do anything; the King is a saint." His loves were of a strange sort. He had none of the attributes of a lover save jealousy.



He provided Mme d'Hautefort with horses, dogs, birds, and the like. He gave her the succession to the lady of the wardrobe, and she received some gifts. But he was jealous of d'Esgvilly-Vassé, and he had to be brought to believe that this gentleman was a kinsman of the fair one. The King wished to know it from d'Hozier's lips, but the word was passed to d'Hozier, and he said everything he was wanted to say.

Mme de la Flotte, the widow of one of the MM. du Bellay, offered herself as governess of the Queen-Mother's daughters, although the employment was one beneath her station, and obtained the post by her importunity. She gave her daughter's daughter, from the age of twelve, to the Queen-Mother: this was Mme d'Hautefort. She was beautiful. The King fell in love with her, and the Queen grew jealous, by which the King was not greatly concerned. The girl, with thoughts of marriage, or of giving the King some cause of inquietude, permitted some liberties to be taken with herself. One week he was lost in her; next week, he almost loathed her. When the Queen-Mother was arrested at Compiègne, Mme de la Flotte was made lady of the wardrobe in place of Mme du Fargis, and her granddaughter is accepted as successor.

On some journey or other the King went to a ball in a small town. At the end of the ball, a girl named Catin Gau climbed on a chair to take a candle-end, not of a wax candle, but of a common grease dip in a wooden stick. The King said that she did this with so good a grace that he fell in love with her, and on leaving he had her given ten thousand crowns for her goodness.

The King afterwards lost his heart to La Fayette. The Queen and Mme d'Hautefort made league against her, and from that time they got on together very well. The King turned back to Mme d'Hautefort again, and the Cardinal caused her to be sent packing, but that in no way broke her alliance with the Queen. One day Mme d'Hautefort was holding a letter which the King desired to see, but she refused to show it. At last he made an attempt to take it, and she, being on the closest familiarity with him, placed it in her bosom, saying: "If you want it, will you take it from in there?" Guess what he did! From fear of touching this lovely girl's breast, he took up the tongs from the hearth!

The late King used to begin his cajoling of a girl by saying to her: "No naughty thoughts!" Once he had written an air which took his fancy, and sent to ask Bois-Robert to put words to it for him. Bois-Robert made some verses on the King's love

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for Mme d'Hautefort, but the King said to him: "They are neat enough. But you must take out the word *desires*, for I have no sort of desire."

The Queen, according to the journals of the Cardinal, injured herself by the application of a plaster, before she became pregnant with the future Louis XIV. The King lay with her but rarely. "Putting on the bolster," it was called, for ordinarily the Queen did not use one. When he was informed that the Queen was with child, he said: "Then that must be from such-and-such a day." For a bout of weakness, he used to take some cool drinks and he was bled frequently. This was not beneficial to his health. But I was forgetting that Hérouard, his chief physician, has compiled several volumes which begin from the hour of the King's birth and continue up to the siege of La Rochelle, wherein you will see nothing but the hours at which he awoke, breakfasted, spat, relieved himself, etc.

The pains that were taken to amuse the King at hunting helped greatly to make him difficult. But the chase did not occupy him so fully that he had not full leisure to grow bored. At times he would take somebody and say to him: "Let us stand at this window, and let's be bored, let's be bored!" Then he would sink into musing.

One could hardly reckon all the fine occupations which he learned, apart from those connected with the chase; for he could make clyster pipes, laces, nets, arquebuses, coins—and M. d'Angoulême pleasingly said to him, "Sire, you carry your own abolition with you!" He was a good maker of preserves, and a good gardener; he grew green peas which he sent for sale to the market. Montauron, it is said, bought them at a high price, for they were the first of the season. Montauron also bought, for diplomatic reasons, all the Ruel wine of Cardinal Richelieu, who took pleasure in saying: "I have sold my wine at a hundred *livres* the cask."

The King set himself to learn to lard. One would see George the equerry coming with splendid larding-pins and

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great loins of veal. And once somebody came to announce that "His Majesty was larding." Notice how admirably the words accord, *majesty* and *larding*!

I am afraid of forgetting one of his accomplishments. He could shave well. One day he cut the beards of all his officers, and left them only a little tuft on the chin. There was a song made about it:

*Hélas! ma pauvre barbe,  
Qu'est-ce qui t'a faite ainsi?  
C'est le grand roi Louis  
Treizième de ce nom  
Qui toute a ébarbé sa maison, etc.*

He composed music, and had a pretty fair understanding thereof. He made an air for the rondeau on the death of the Cardinal:

*Il est passé, il a plié bagage, etc.*

Miron, master of the audits, was its author.

He painted a little. In a word, he was just as his epitaph says:

*He was Endowed with Menial Virtues  
Beyond numbering,  
And of Those which most Befit a Master  
He had None.*

His last occupation was making window-frames with M. de Noyers. But there is one kingly virtue that has been found for him: if indeed dissimulation is to be held as such. On the eve of the arrest of MM. de Vendôme, he caressed them repeatedly, and the next day he said to M. de Liancourt, "Would you ever have believed that?" "No, Sire," he answered, "you have carried out your impersonation too well." He showed that this reply had not been too agreeable, yet it was plain that he was asking praise for having dissimulated so skilfully.

He once did something which his brother, M. d'Orléans, would not have done. Plessis-Besançon was going to lay certain accounts before him, and, being a man who was always absorbed in whatever he was doing, he spread out his books on the King's working desk, after unthinkingly placing his hat on his head. The King said nothing. When he had finished, he looked everywhere for his hat. "It has been on your head for a considerable time," remarked the King. M. d'Orléans

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once sent to offer a cushion to a man who, without thinking, had seated himself in a hall through which His Royal Highness was strolling.

The King did not like his chief personal attendants to be gentlemen, for he used to say that he wanted to be able to thrash them, and he did not think he could thrash a gentleman without wronging himself. According to this, he did not hold Beringhen a gentleman.

I have said before that he was naturally malicious. He used to say: "So-and-so is greatly relieved, I think, by my edict against duelling!" He made mock of those who did not fight, at the same time issuing edicts against those who did. He had all the petty pride of a squireen, and used to think that his honour was being offended when a sergeant entered the palace precincts. He wanted to have one such beaten who had come to carry out his duty in the courtyard of Fontainebleau, for some debt. But a councillor of state who happened to be there said to him: "But, Sire, it should be known in whose name and by whose warrant he is doing this." The documents were brought. "Sire," he was told, "it is in the King's name: these men are the ministers of your own justice." King Philip II of Spain ordered that the sergeants should have entry into all the houses of the great, and thereafter they were respected everywhere.

He has been recognised as miserly in everything. After the death of the Cardinal, he struck off all the pensions of men of letters, saying: "We're not going to be troubled with *that* any more."

Again, after the Cardinal's death, M. de Schomberg told him that Corneille was desirous of dedicating to him his tragedy of *Polyeucte*. This alarmed him, because Montauron had given two hundred pistoles to Corneille for *Cinna*. "Quite unnecessary," he said. "Ah, Sire," pursued M. de Schomberg, "it is not an interested offer." "Oh, very well, then," said the King. "It will give me pleasure." It was to the Queen that the tragedy was dedicated in the end, for meanwhile the King died.

On one occasion at Saint-Germain, he desired to see the household lists of food. He cut off a milk soup which Mme la Générale Coquet used to eat every morning. True, she made a pig of herself quite enough without that.

He found on the accounts some biscuits which had been given to M. de La Vrillière. At this very moment M. de La Vrillière came in. Brusquely, the King said, "From what I



can see here, La Vrillière, you're very fond of biscuits." But, on the other hand, he had the air of liberality when, reading: "A pot of jelly for so-and-so, being sick," he exclaimed: "I could wish it had cost me six times that, and he were not dead!" He cut off three pairs of slippers from his wardrobe; and when M. the Marquis de Rambouillet, who was its grand keeper, asked him what should be done with twenty pistoles left over from what had been granted to buy horses for the litters, the King said to him: "Give them to so-and-so, musketeer, to whom I owe them. One must begin by paying one's debts." He stopped the falconers from buying the square pieces from the kitchen servants, which they did for trifling sums, and made the latter give them for the birds, without recompensing the kitchen servants.

He was not humane in feeling. In Picardy once he saw some oats mown down, although they were still green, and some peasant-folk gathered round this damage; instead of complaining of the King's light-horsemen who had just accomplished this fine exploit, these people prostrated themselves before him and called down blessings on him. "I am extremely angry," he said to them, "at the injury done to you there." "It is nothing, Sire," they answered him, "all is in your keeping. So long as you yourself flourish, 'tis enough." "A good people!" said he to his followers. But he did not have anything given them, nor did he think of having a relief from the *taille* tax allowed them.

One of the greatest acts of humanity, I think, that his life could show, was on one occasion in Lorraine. The peasant in whose house he was dining, in a village where they were very comfortably placed before this last war, was so much taken by a certain soup of partridge and vegetables that he followed it right to the King's table. "This is a splendid soup," said the King. "That is certainly the opinion of your host, Sire," said the chief serving-man; "he has not once taken his eyes from off it." "Indeed," said the King. "Then I desire that he partake of it." So he had it covered again and ordered it to be served to the man.

The Cardinal, having sent Mme d'Hautefort away, and Mme La Fayette having retired to a convent, the King announced his desire of going to the Bois de Vincennes, and on the way he spent five hours at the house of the Daughters of the Blessed Mary, where La Fayette was. As he came out, Nogent said to him, "Sire, you have just seen the unhappy prisoner?" "I am more



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of a prisoner than she," answered the King. The Cardinal had a suspicion of this long conversation, and sent M. de Noyers thither, to whom M. de Tresmes did not dare to refuse the door.

His Eminence saw clearly that the King must have some amusement, and cast his eyes, as I have said, on Cinq-Mars, who was already quite agreeable to the King.

At first, M. de Cinq-Mars set the King carousing. There was dancing, and much drinking of toasts. But as he was a spirited youth and fond of his pleasures, he soon grew weary of a life which he had only taken up unwillingly. Moreover, La Chesnaye, chief of the personal attendants, who was his spy, had put him on bad terms with the Cardinal, for La Chesnaye told the latter a hundred trifles about the King which Cinq-Mars did not tell at all, and which the Cardinal wished to know of. Cinq-Mars, having become the chief equerry and Comte de Dampmartin, had La Chesnaye dismissed, but this also helped on the hostility between himself and the Cardinal.

We have told how the King loved him to distraction. Fontrailles used to tell how once at Saint-Germain he entered very abruptly into M. le Grand's chamber; he surprised him as he was having himself rubbed from head to foot with oil of jasmine; and, placing himself in bed, Cinq-Mars said to him in a rather uncertain voice, "That is more cleanly." A moment after came a knock. It was the King. It would appear, as the son of the late L'Huillier said on being told this, that he was anointing himself for contest.

I have been told also that once, during some journey or other, the King retired to bed about seven o'clock. Immediately two large dogs leapt on to the bed, tumbled it about completely, and began kissing His Majesty. He sent M. le Grand to undress, who returned adorned like a bride. "To bed, to bed," he said to him impatiently. He was content to chase the dogs away without having the bed remade, and the mignon was not in before the King was already kissing his hands. But he did not find that M. le Grand, whose heart was elsewhere, responded to his great ardour, for he said to him: "But what is it, my friend? What is wrong? What do you want? You're so sad? De Nieſt!<sup>1</sup> Ask him what annoys him: look you, have you ever seen such favour shown to anyone?" He had him spied upon to know whether he was going somewhere under the rose.

M. le Grand had been in love with Marion de L'Orme

### LOUIS XIII

more than he was then. Once on his way to find her in Brie, he was mistaken for a thief by some men who were actually running after some robbers. They tied him to a tree, and, if he had not been recognised by someone, they would have thrown him in prison. Mme d'Effiat was afraid lest he should marry this young woman, and procured legal injunctions. He had infuriated his mother for some time, for she was miserly, and he, out of spite, used to change his clothes four times a day, and went to see her as many times. But she got over this aversion from the time he came into favour. She might well love him, for he was the only one who was worth anything. He had courage. He fought, and fought very well, against Du Dognon, now Marshal Foucault. He had wit, and his person was finely fashioned. Her eldest son died mad; he used to make soles for shoes out of the finest tapestries of Chilly; and the abbé is a person of very small consequence, though witty enough.

The greatest passion of M. le Grand at that time was for Chemerault, now Mme de La Bazinière. She was then in a religious house in Paris. She had been dismissed from the Queen's household on his account, and in the end sent into Poitou. One evening at Saint-Germain he met Rumigny and said to him: "Follow me. I must go away to have converse with Chemerault. There is a place on the moat where I want to pass; someone is waiting for me there with two horses." They went out; but the groom had gone to sleep on the ground and his two horses had been taken away. M. le Grand was in despair. They went on into the town to try to obtain other horses, but they noticed a man following them at a distance. It was a light horseman, the chief spy kept by the King on M. le Grand, and when the latter recognised him he summoned him to come and speak with him. The fellow insisted that they were going out to fight each other. He protested that they were nothing of the kind, and in the end the man withdrew. Whereupon Rumigny advised M. le Grand to give up his plan and return, for fear of angering the King, to go to bed, and, in a couple of hours' time, to send to invite some officers of the wardrobe to come and entertain him, because he could not sleep. In this way, he urged, he would throw doubt for a time on the credibility of his spies, for they would not fail to tell the King next morning that he had gone out. M. le Grand accepted this counsel. Next morning the King greeted him with "Well, so you have been to Paris?" But he produced his witnesses

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against that, and the spy was confounded. So he had freedom to make three nocturnal journeys to Paris.

To tell the truth, it was a sad life the King made him lead. In all probability, the King shunned company, and Paris above all, because he was ashamed of the calamitous state of the people. There were hardly any cries of *Long live the King!* when he passed. But he was incapable of putting order into anything. The only care he had reserved for himself was to purvey for the companies of the guards' regiment and of the old corps, and he was more jealous of that than of anything else. It has been remarked that the King liked everything that M. le Grand hated, and that M. le Grand hated everything that the King liked. They agreed in one thing only, and that was in detesting the Cardinal. I have already told this story elsewhere.

After the death of Cardinal Richelieu, the King manifested his joy at receiving papers himself. He used to say that he would never have a favourite to keep. He was more fond, it seemed, of M. de Noyers than of anyone, and when some work was spoken of, he would say, if M. de Noyers were not there, "No, no. Let us wait for the good little fellow." The other came with his cringing air. He was good at serving under somebody else. He was, as people used to say, a "clog Jesuit," for he was one without wearing the habit or living with them. (The illegitimate daughters of the Queen are called the "clogs," because clogs are left at the door.) It was he, nevertheless, who brought about the dismissal of Father Sirmond, but to replace him with one who was, so to speak, more of a Jesuit, for this worthy father is rather too frank, and he writes only small books: they like one to write large volumes. The "good little fellow," trusting to the affection of the King, found himself caught, for Cardinal Mazarin and Chavigny gave to those who approached the King, and although he was always at Saint-Germain, and they almost always in Paris, they nevertheless ousted him. He died soon afterwards at Dangu, a house of his near Pontoise. Already people were *scratching* at his door,<sup>2</sup> as at that of the Cardinal.

Soon afterwards the late King died himself. He had always dreaded the Devil, for he did not love God, but had a great fear of Hell. He had the Dauphin baptized, and Cardinal Mazarin

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held him as proxy for the Pope. He was impelled by a vision, twenty years ago, to place his kingdom under the protection of the Virgin, and in the declaration which he issued concerning it, there were these words: "*To the end that all Our good subjects may enter into Paradise, for such is Our Will and Pleasure.*" That was the conclusion of this noble piece.

In his last illness, he was strangely superstitious. One day he was told of some pretended saint or other who had a quite peculiar gift of discovering the bodies of saints, and who used to say as he walked along, "Search in here: there's a saint's body in here." Whereupon Nogent exclaimed in his manner of a bad buffoon, as the Cardinal's journal says: "If I had him I'd take him with me into Burgundy: he'd find me plenty of truffles!" The King was furious, and cried: "Out of here, you rascal!" (One day when Nogent entered the King's apartment, he said to him, "Ah, Nogent! I am delighted to see you: I thought you had been exiled.") He died steadfastly enough, and said, looking over at the tower of Saint-Denis, which is visible from the new castle of Saint-Germain, where he was lying sick, "That is where I shall soon be lying." He said to M. le Prince: "Cousin, I have been thinking that my cousin, your son, was engaging the enemy, and that he was gaining the upper hand." It was the battle of Rocroy. He sent for the Parliament, to make them promise that they would observe the declaration he had made. It was founded on that of the Cardinal, wherein he had only made some alteration. By this declaration, the Queen had an obligatory council, and had thereon only her own voice, no more than anyone else. He told them she would ruin everything were they to make her Regent, like the late Queen-Mother. She threw herself at his knees. He soon made her rise; he understood her well, and treated her with contempt.

It was said when Monsieur le Prince died, and had also shown strength of mind, that there was no longer any honour in dying well, since these two men had managed to do so. People went to the funeral of the King as to a wedding, and appeared before the Queen as at a tourney.

<sup>1</sup> His chief personal attendant. [T.]

<sup>2</sup> It was customary, says Monmerqué, to *scratch* at a royal door, instead of knocking; and flatterers were used to pay this compliment to the powerful.



## M. D'ORLÉANS (GASTON)



AS a child, Monsieur d'Orléans was extremely pretty, and it is told of him that, seven or eight years ago, on seeing the King and M. d'Anjou, he said: "Don't be astonished by trifles! I was just as pretty as that!"

But he did something very ridiculous at Fontainebleau, when he had a certain gentleman pitched into the canal for not having shown him sufficient respect, according to his way of thinking. There was much outcry over that; he refused to ask the gentleman's pardon, even although he was reminded of the example of Charles IX, who learned once, when king, that a man to whom he had given a touch of his switch in the heat of the chase, was a gentleman. "I am no more myself," he said, and gave him satisfaction. But the other was never willing to appear at Court.

The Queen-Mother wished him to be whipped, and that made him take the resolution.

M. d'Orléans complained frequently that the only tutors given him were a Turk and a Corsican: M. de Brèves, who had been so long in Constantinople that he had become quite a Mussulman, and the Marshal d'Ornano, son of Aphonse of Corsica. This Marshal had a pleasing scruple: he never dared touch a woman whose name was Marie, so strong was his devotion to the Virgin; being in love with Mme de Gravelle, he had her portrait painted with beams darting from her eyes, and underneath was the inscription:

*And from her eyes there sped effulgent rays.*

Gaston was rather wild in his youth, and he has painted the town red more than once. A good fellow enough, and by no means lacking in wit. One day, when a great number of courtiers were with him at his levée, a cherished gold watch of his was stolen. "We must shut the doors," said somebody,

## M. D'ORLEANS (GASTON)

"and search every one." But Monsieur said, humanely: "On the contrary, gentlemen: you must all go out, in case the watch happens to strike and discloses the person who has availed himself of it." And he made them all leave the room.

The finest thing he ever did in his life was his remaining faithful to his second wife, Margaret of Lorraine, and never to have wished to forsake her. She is a poor idiot, but with some spirit none the less. When they were remarried at Meudon, after the death of the Cardinal, she wept, because she imagined she had been in mortal sin till then. She is pretty, but has bad teeth and holds her head down between her shoulders. True, she straightens herself up when dancing, and she dances well. She is the very opposite of her predecessor, who was proud as a dragon. The King was mightily pleased when he saw that she had brought forth only a daughter.

At a party where every one was telling some story to make mock of Cardinal Richelieu, M. de Chavigny also joined in with a story. With a smile, M. d'Orléans said to him: *Et tu quoque, fili*, for it was said that he was the son of the Cardinal, who in his youth had lain with Mme Bouthillier. It was this lady who made the fortunes of the house. She caused her husband to be given a post with the Queen-Mother, and afterwards he became treasurer. She also had her brother-in-law made coadjutor of Tours.

A word or two of the loves of Monsieur. He was still quite young when he became a widower, and used to say: "I am not quite suited to this sort of gallantry nowadays, seeming to be sickly, being pale, fainting away." Indeed, he has always been a ruddy fellow. I think he had some small adventures of gallantry in Flanders, but I have found nothing memorable. On his return he fell in love with a pretty creature of the Saint-Paul neighbourhood, Mme Ribaudon by name, and sundry verses were current about them.

*La Ribaudon, quand Monsieur la regarde,  
Père, frère, mari, tout le monde est en garde,  
Tout doux, etc. . . .*

At that time, he used to play and take meals very frequently with the ladies of this fair one's neighbourhood. He thought

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very highly of Mme de Ribaudon, but it is not said that he received any favour of her. Since then she has died, through lack of care for herself: she was delicate, and wanted to do all that the most robust do.

After Mme de Ribaudon, Monsieur's love was for a girl of Tours, Louison Roger by name. She belonged to a leading family of the town. M. de Montbazon, who had property near Tours and was often there, had previously given her a little silver plaque; Monsieur presented her with a large one. She was a pleasing girl, and had lively spirits. One day, as they were chatting, she cried out: "Oh, bless us! Monsieur's big plaque has tried to swallow M. de Montbazon's little one!" She took two years before she would allow Monsieur to speak with her except in the company of two elderly companions. This intrigue brought its pleasures, but jealousy was soon mingled with it, for L'Épinay, a gentleman of Normandy, then the favourite of Monsieur, was thrown out of favour, as was Louison also.

This L'Épinay, according to what is said, had served his master so faithfully on this lady's account, that it was believed that he had triumphed the first. He lived so indiscreetly that rumours of his ways reached the ears of the King, who did not fail to rally Monsieur, who up to then had had no doubts, although he was quite honourably on his guard. The first time he saw the fair one, he made her confess everything, and L'Épinay, knowing that, was so imprudent that, instead of writing to her that he was astounded by her saying the contrary to what she knew, he wrote to her by the Comte de Brion a letter in which he begged her to send him a lock of her hair. Louison refused to receive it, and gave Monsieur warning. He had Brion searched, and found no trace of the letter, but a search at his lodging discovered it in the mattress of his bed. La Rivière said that M. d'Orléans had found in M. de Brion's breeches a letter from Louison to L'Épinay. He had thoughts of having him stabbed, and spoke of it to the late King, who was of the same mind, for, besides being by nature rather cruel, he thought that this example would hold back those who were taking liberties from telling the story to Mme d'Hautefort. But Cardinal Richelieu, who was also taken into counsel, prevented it. The Cardinal did not like the Court to acquire a habit of assassinations. Nevertheless, Monsieur had guards set round Louison's lodging at night, with orders to kill L'Épinay if he came thither.

I learned from a friend of mine, who had it from the Abbé



de La Rivière, that M. L'Épinay went off to Paris after Monsieur had dismissed him, and met M. de Brion at Étampes. To the latter, as to a friend, he gave a letter for Louison, wherein he said that his disgrace was a grief to him only because it sundered him from her whom he loved, and that his sole consolation was the pleasure of kissing the bracelet of her hair which she had given him. Word was conveyed to Monsieur that M. de Brion had seen L'Épinay on the way, so, waiting until he had retired, he entered his chamber and took possession of his breeches, in which the letter was hidden. This is what finally convinced him that Louison had been unfaithful to him.

The banished L'Épinay made his way to Holland, where he found easy access to the Queen of Bohemia's Court. Entering there with the reputation of a gentleman of fortunate gallantry, he was received with greater consideration than another would have been, and, in his ambition to devote himself only to princesses or the mistresses of princes, he is said to have paid his addresses first to the mother, and afterwards to the Princess Louise: for Louises were fatal to this youth. This girl, it is said, became pregnant, and retired when her time was at hand to Leyden, where no trouble was made about such things.

But the Princess Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, who is a virtuous young woman, and much fairer to the eye than the other, could not tolerate her mother, the Queen, eyeing with favour a man who had so outrageously affronted their family. She incited her brothers against him, but the Elector was content with flinging L'Épinay's hat on the ground one day when, on account of a shower, he had covered himself by the Queen's command. But the youngest, Philip, who was later killed at the battle of Rhétel, took this insult more to heart, and one day, near the fashionable resort at The Hague, he attacked L'Épinay, who was accompanied by two men, and he himself had no more. They fought for some time, but were separated by persons who arrived on the scene. Every one advised L'Épinay to withdraw, but he would never do anything of the kind. At last, having dined one day with M. de la Tuilerie, the French ambassador, he went out with Des Loges, son of M. des Loges. If anyone had thought that Prince Philip would have dared to have him assassinated in broad daylight, he would not have been left unaccompanied, and it was only by chance that M. de la Vieuville (the present duke), who had also dined at the ambassador's, did not go along with him. Well, he was set upon by eight or ten Englishmen, in Prince Philip's presence. Des



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Loges did not put a finger on his sword, and L'Épinay defended himself alone as best he could. But he was run through by so many thrusts that the swords met in his body. He made an effort to escape, but fell; still, on his knees, he put up some resistance, and then breathed his last.

As for the Princess Louise, she changed her religion and is Abbess of Maubuisson, where she leads an exemplary life. Mme de Longueville wrote from The Hague, where she saw her when on her way to Munster: "I have seen the Princess Elizabeth, and I do not think anyone envies L'Épinay the crown of his martyrdom." As for the Queen of Bohemia, people only think that she was very pleased that her daughter found some diversion. L'Épinay was welcome at the Court of the Prince of Orange, who was not displeased that he should be often in the company of his son. L'Épinay was spirited and adroit, and would assuredly have made good his fortunes there.

Meanwhile the hapless Louison, seeing that Monsieur refused to acknowledge the son of whom she was brought to bed, took religious vows at Tours, at the House of the Daughters of the Visitation, made over to her friends everything she had been able to have from her own house and from Monsieur, and left only twenty thousand *livres* to her son. With the revenues from this he was to be maintained until he was acknowledged, or until he was able to go and lose his life in the wars, if recognition were refused him. The boy was seen once to take a sword in his hand, and someone said to him: "Put that back in its sheath, you little rogue: that's the surest way of never being recognised for your father's son!" Monsieur is in no way brave. (The aged Lambert, governor of Metz, who had served a long time without receiving so much as a scratch, used to say laughing: "So-and-so" (I have forgotten the name), "Monsieur d'Orléans and myself, we have often been at blows, but never yet been wounded.")

She is still living, and only four years ago Monsieur was passing through Tours and was desirous to speak with her. His wife prevented it. Louison sent her some fruit. Mademoiselle took a fancy to the little boy, and keeps him with her. But Monsieur takes good care not to acknowledge him, for, besides the fact that he believes L'Épinay to be the father, he would have to provide for him.

He can play the vulgar tricks of a page, but yet is so rankly vainglorious that in his coach no one is ever allowed to sit with

*M. D'ORLEANS (GASTON)*

his head covered, even on a journey. The late King made great mock of him. He is so restless that he has to be buttoned up at a run. He wears his hat always like a swashbuckler, is always whistling, and keeps his hand always in his breeches. The rest we shall tell in the *Memoirs of the Regency*.

# FATHER JOSEPH AND THE NUNS OF LOUDUN



HE family name of Father Joseph, of the Capuchins, was Leclerc. He was brother to M. du Tremblay, whom he made governor of the Bastille. The Cardinal made his acquaintance in Poitou, whither he had been sent by his superiors. Never was there a man of more intriguing disposition or of fierier spirit.

His head was always full of great plans. At one time he did nothing but preach the Holy War. M. de Mantoue, M. de Brèves, Mme de Rohan, and Father Joseph used very often to vanquish the whole Turkish dominion together. Later on he took the house of Austria as his goal, and worked hard to bring the King of Sweden to enter Germany. He boasted of being born to lay low the house of Austria. In point of fact, he was far from being a fool; he gave great comfort to the Cardinal, who never took a step without him. In the early days he used to go about on horseback, and one day Father Ange Soubini had a stallion, and Father Joseph a mare. The stallion mounted the mare, and the hoods of the two friars made the most amusing picture in the world. "An impudent animal!" said Father Joseph; and thereafter that horse was always called "Impudent." To avoid such scandals, he was given a coach. Later, he had a litter and all manner of things: he was certainly on the way to becoming a cardinal, had he not died.

In a small town of some province or other in France, a certain courtier went to see a Capuchin. The chiefs of the order came to entertain him, and asked him news of the King, then of Cardinal Richelieu. "And now," said the superior, "can you tell us anything of our good Father Joseph?"

"He is in the best of health; he is dispensed from all kinds of austerities."

## FATHER JOSEPH AND THE NUNS

"Poor man!" said the superior.

"He has high standing: the greatest courtiers visit him with respect."

"Poor man!" said the superior.

"He has a fine litter when he travels."

"Poor man!"

"A mule for his litter."

"Poor man!"

"When there is something good at the Cardinal's table, it is sent to him."

"Poor man!"

And so on: to each item the worthy superior ejaculated "Poor man!" as if the poor man were an object of pity. It is from this anecdote that Molière took what he wrote in his *Tartuffe*, where the husband, infatuated with the bigot, repeats several times "Poor man!"

People have maintained that the diabolic possession at Loudun would never have happened but for him, for Grandier, the *curé*, and the Capuchins of Loudun disputed as to who should have the ruling of the nuns who were, or pretended to be, possessed. There was a love affair mixed up with it, and a Capuchin was killed. The Capuchins, seeing that they were supported by Father Joseph, pushed out Grandier, and persuaded the nuns, who were poor, that they would soon find themselves with gold for the asking. So they were instructed to act their possession by devils. As for Latin, they hardly knew a word, and it used to be said that the Loudun devils had only studied a third of their Latin grammars. Le Couldray Montpensier had two daughters there whom he took back home; he had them well treated and well whipped, whereupon the devil instantly fled from them.

Possibly there were some who did not know the secret, and imagined, either in melancholy or because they were told so, that they were possessed. They were taught, or the majority at least, a few words of Latin, and a good many loose words. Mme d'Aiguillon was there, and Mlle de Rambouillet, later Mme de Montausier. They saw some tumblers' tricks performed, which in turn they afterwards had done by their lackeys. The town, and the innkeepers especially, grew rich over it. People rushed thither from all parts. Duneau, a Huguenot physician, and principal of the College of Saumur, was summoned. He laughed at it all. It was he who said that a physician was *animal incombustibile propter religionem*. Quillet also was summoned, and when certain nuns of Chinon showed



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a desire to imitate those of Loudun, he composed a satire about it in Latin verses, on account of which Bautru advised him to take himself off, and made him over to Marshal d'Estrées, with whom he served in Rome in his extraordinary embassy.

When the minister of Loudun was challenged to put his fingers into the mouths of the nuns, in the same way as the priests placed the fingers with which they hold the host, he replied that he had no familiarities with the devil, and did not at all want to play with him. One devil had boasted that he would carry off the minister in his pulpit on to the tower of Loudun. But he did no such thing.

This foolish business, or rather this desire of the Capuchins for vengeance, was the cause of Grandier's being burnt alive, for Laubardemont, a good courtier, sacrificed him to the credit of Father Joseph. This Grandier had been a man of gallantry, and had made enemies for himself in the town, who did him harm. On one occasion the devil announced: "M. de Laubardemont is a cuckold." And Laubardemont, as his custom was, set down in his account that evening: *All of which I declare to be truth*, and duly signed it.

In the end, the whole business vanished into thin air, as people gradually became disillusioned.

## SAUVAGE



NE of Monsieur d'Orléans' followers was Sauvage. He was a very agreeable fellow, whose god was his belly. He used to give admirable imitations of the songs of the Pont Neuf. When Monsieur had gone away to Lorraine, he was anxious to seek him out, and, in order to get hold of boots cheaply, he ordered a pair from each of ten or twelve different shoemakers, giving them different hours to call. To each one he declared that one boot was too tight, and then gave them all one time at which to bring them back. When they came—they found nobody!

From Brussels Sauvage used to send gazettes full of inventions to spike the wheels of Renaudot, whose *Gazette de France* was beginning to circulate. The gazette of Sauvage was much more popular than the other. Moreover, for the sake of diversion, he used every day to contrive some imposture or other. It was he who had engraved the representation of a fish which he styled the "Adriatic carp," in the body of which had been found, according to the inscription, I know not how many muskets, halberds, crosses, etc. This circulated throughout France. His last imposture was an edict of the parliament of Grenoble, whereby a certain child was declared legitimate, although the mother confessed that it was conceived during her husband's absence, on the grounds that it was done by the force of imagination, she thinking that he was living with her. The names were given, and those of the doctors and midwife too. Plenty of good folk believed it. It was written in the true style of Grenoble, and the procurator-general of Paris wrote to that of Grenoble concerning this edict. The parliament there issued one against the author, whereof the latter only made mock. In the medical schools the question was debated whether the force of imagination could suffice to produce a conception. Sometimes Sauvage concocted also satiric gazettes, as that one in which he said: "The God of the Charente who appeared to Balzac has arrived here, as little of a God as ever."

## MADAME DE RAMBOUILLET



AS I have said elsewhere, Mme de Rambouillet is a daughter of the late Marquis de Pisani, and of a lady named Savelli, widow of an Ursin. Her mother was an able woman, who took pains to educate her in the Italian tongue, so that she might be equally familiar with that and with French. This lady was always esteemed at Court, and was sent by Henry IV with Mme de Guise, the supervisor of the Queen's household, to receive the Queen-Mother at Marseilles. She married her daughter (who had ten thousand crowns income from her family), before she was twelve years old, to the Vidame of Le Mans.

Mme de Rambouillet says that at first she looked on her husband, who was then twice as old as she, as a grown man, that she regarded herself as a child, and that this has always remained rooted in her inmost heart and has brought her to respect him the more deeply. The trials apart, there never was a man so considerate to his wife. She has admitted to me that he has always been in love with her, and did not believe that one could have more spirit than he had. Truth to tell, it was no great matter for him to be considerate, for she herself was never one to wish for anything but what was reasonable. But she vows that if she had been left until she was twenty, and had she not been obliged to marry, she would have remained unwed. And I think her fully capable of this resolution, when I reflect that from the age of twenty she no longer desired to go to the assemblies at the Louvre, a strange enough circumstance for one who was young and beautiful and a person of quality. (At the state entry which was to have been made for the Queen-Mother when Henry IV had been crowned, Mme de Rambouillet was one of the beauties who were to take part in the ceremony.) She used to say that the only pleasure she found there was watching how people thronged to enter in, and that sometimes

it came about that she would place herself in a room to amuse herself with the wretched ordering of such things that prevails in France. It was not that she had no taste for diversion, but she preferred it in private.

She has always loved what was beautiful, and was going to learn Latin, merely that she might read Virgil, when an illness prevented her. Since then she has thought no more of it, and has been content with Spanish. She has abilities in all manner of things. She was herself the architect of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, which was the house of her father. Dissatisfied with all the designs made for her (it was in the time of the Marshal d'Ancre, for then people knew nothing, except to make a hall at one side, a room at the other, and a staircase in the middle: moreover, the place was irregular and of quite small dimensions), she exclaimed one evening, after a long meditation about it, "Quick! Paper! I've found the way of doing what I wanted." And forthwith she sketched out the plan of it. For she could draw, of course, and having once seen a house she can work out its plan with the greatest of ease: whence it came that she waged war with Voiture because he never retained anything of all the fine buildings he saw, and this gave rise to the ingenious jesting which he addressed to her on the castle of Valentino.

The design of Mme de Rambouillet was followed from point to point. It is from her that people learned to set the staircases on one side to allow a great suite of rooms, to raise partitions higher, and to make doors and windows high and wide and opposite each other. So true is this that the Queen-Mother, when she had the Luxembourg built, bade the architects go to see the Hôtel de Rambouillet; and they were repaid for their pains. She was the first who thought of having a room painted in any colour other than red or tan: whence the name given to her principal apartment—the "Blue Room."

I have remarked elsewhere that Madame la Princesse and the Cardinal La Valette were great friends of hers. Indeed, the Hôtel de Rambouillet was, so to speak, the theatre of all diversions, and the meeting-place of all that was most gallant at court and all that was finest among the talents of the age. Well, although Cardinal Richelieu was under the greatest possible obligation to Cardinal La Vallette, he wished nevertheless to know all his thoughts as well as he might those of another; and one day, when M. de Rambouillet was in Spain, he sent Father Joseph to visit Mme de Rambouillet. Without any pretence, he brought her to converse of this embassy, and



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afterwards told her that, since her husband was employed in a negotiation of some import, the Cardinal could take the opportunity of doing him some considerable service, but that she should contribute something on her side, and give His Eminence a small satisfaction which he desired of her; he pointed out that a minister could not take too many precautions; in a word, he declared that the Cardinal was anxious to have information through her of the intrigues of Madame la Princesse and Cardinal La Vallette.

"Father Joseph," she said to him, "I do not believe these two persons have any intrigues; but, had they any, I should not be a fitting person to play the part of spy."

He made a false move: no one in the world was less self-seeking than she. She declares she knows of no greater pleasure in the world than sending money to people without their knowing whence it comes. She goes far beyond those who say that giving is a King's pleasure: she says it is a pleasure of God.

In telling me this little tale of Father Joseph, she remarked (for there is no one in the world more upright) that she would suffer ecclesiastics as gallants even less than other men. "'Tis one of the reasons," she added, "why I am very glad not to have stayed in Rome. For, although I was very certain of doing no ill, yet I was not certain that no ill was said of me; and apparently, if it had been said of me, malice would have set me with some cardinal."

Never was there a better friend. M. d'Andilly, who liked to be thought a teacher of friendship, told her one day that he wished to instruct her fully in this fair science, and gave her some prolix lessons. But, to cut it short with one stroke, she said to him: "Far from not doing everything possible for my friends, if I knew that there were some honourable man in the farther Indies, I should endeavour, without knowing any more of him than that, to do for him all that would be to his advantage." "What!" exclaimed M. d'Andilly. "You know so much as that! Then I have no more to explain to you."

Mme de Rambouillet is still, at the present day, of a humour to find diversion in everything. One of her greatest pleasures was to surprise people. On one occasion she afforded M. de Cospéan, Bishop of Lisieux, a pleasure which he did not expect. He went to see her at Rambouillet. At the foot of the castle there lies a very large meadow, in the midst of which, by a freak of nature, stands a rough circle of large rocks; between them rise tall trees, casting a very agreeable shade. (It is the place where

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Rabelais amused himself, according to the talk of the district; for Cardinal du Bellay, to whom he was attached, and the Rambouillet, as close kinsmen, used often to go and pass the time at this house, and there is one hollow and smoked rock which still at the present time is called "Rabelais's stew-pan.") Well, the Marquise proposed to M. de Lisieux to go for a walk in the meadow, and being come near enough to these rocks to see through the leafiness of the trees, he caught sight here and there of something gleaming. Approaching nearer, he fancied that he discerned some women clad as nymphs. The Marquise, at first, pretended to see nothing of what he saw. At last, coming right up to the rocks, they discovered Mme de Rambouillet and all the young girls of the house clad as nymphs; and, seated on the rocks, they made the most delightful spectacle in the world. The good gentleman was so charmed by it that ever since he has never seen the Marquise without talking of the rocks of Rambouillet.

If her estate had been such as to allow of great spending, she would certainly have prepared more costly treats. I have heard her say that the greatest pleasure she could have would have been to build a fine house at the end of the park at Rambouillet, in such secrecy that none of her friends had any inkling of it (and with a little care this would not be impossible, for the place is remote enough and the park one of the largest in France, and a good musket-shot's distance from the castle, which is itself only an old-fashioned edifice); that there she would have brought her best friends to Rambouillet, and next day, when strolling in the park, would have suggested going to see a fine house which one of her neighbours had built some time back; "and then, after many roundabout ways," she said, "I would have brought them into my new house, which I would have shown them without one of my own household appearing, but only people they had never seen: and in the end I would have begged them to stay a few days in this delightful place, whose master was a close enough friend of mine for him to think naught of it. And I leave you to imagine," she added, "what their astonishment would have been when they learned that all this secrecy had only been to give them an agreeable surprise!"

She once caught the Comte de Guiche, now Marshal de Grammont, in a pretty trap. He was still young when he began frequenting the Hôtel de Rambouillet. One evening he was taking leave of the Marquise, when M. de Chaudebonne, the most intimate friend of Mme de Rambouillet, and on very

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familiar terms with him, said to him: "Don't go, Count. Take supper here."

"Gracious!" exclaimed the Marquise, "are you joking? Do you want to make him die of hunger?"

"'Tis my lady who is joking," went on Chaudebonne. "Stay, I beg you."

And stay he did, in the end.

Then, at that moment (for all was concerted), Mlle Paulet arrived, along with Mme de Rambouillet. Supper was served. But on the table there was nothing but what the count disliked, for in their talking, they had made him declare all his aversions.

Amongst other things were a milk soup and a fat turkey-cock, and most admirably did Mlle Paulet play her part.

"Never, my lord," she said, "was there such a fine milk soup: does that helping of yours meet your taste?" And again: "Lord bless us! This splendid turkey! 'Tis tender as a woodcock!—But you're not eating the breast pieces I gave you: you must have something from the little places under the backbone."

And she was all eagerness to serve him, and he, to thank her. He was covered with confusion, and knew not what to think of such a poor supper. He crumbled bread between his fingers. But at last, when every one had been amused by the game, Mme de Rambouillet called to the major-domo, saying: "Bring us something else. My lord can find nothing to his taste here." So then a magnificent supper was served, but not without much laughter.

Another trick was played on him at Rambouillet. One evening when he had been eating heavily of mushrooms, they got hold of his valet, and, obtaining from him all the doublets of the costumes which his master had brought with him, promptly took them in with needle and thread. In the morning Chaudebonne went to see him as he was dressing. But when he wanted to don his doublet, he found it too narrow by four good inches.

"This doublet's very tight," said he to his servant. "Give me the one I had yesterday."

But he found it no roomier than the other.

"Let's try them all," he said. But all were equally tight for him.

"What is it?" he asked. "Have I swollen out? Can it be from eating too many mushrooms?"

"That is quite possible," said Chaudebonne. "You ate a great bellyful of them last evening." And everybody who came



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to see him said the same. And note what the power of imagination can do: he had, as you may imagine, a hue as healthy as the evening before, but none the less he detected, as it seemed to him, something livid in his colour.

Just then the bell rang for Mass, for it was a Sunday, and he was forced to go there in a dressing-gown. Mass over, he began to grow concerned over this swelling, and said with a shivering sort of laugh: "A fine end that would be, to die at one-and-twenty from eating mushrooms!" It was plain that it was going too far, so Chaudebonne said that meanwhile an antidote could be had, that he thought a certain receipt which he remembered should be compounded. He started writing it at once, and handed it to the count. It read:

*Take a pair of good scissors,  
and unstitch your doublets.*

Well, some time afterwards, as if to avenge the count, Mlle de Rambouillet and M. de Chaudebonne did actually eat some bad mushrooms, and no one knows what might have happened had not Mme de Rambouillet discovered some theriac in a cupboard which was searched at hazard.

Mme de Rambouillet has had six children: Mme de Montausier, the eldest of all; Mme d'Hyères, the second; M. de Pisani was afterwards. (There was a well-made boy who died of the plague at eight years old. His governess went to see some plague-stricken person, and on coming thence was foolish enough to kiss this child, and both she and he died of it. Mme de Rambouillet, Mme de Montausier and Mlle Paulet nursed him to his last breath.) Then came Mme de Saint-Étienne, then Mme de Pisani. All the daughters are in religious orders, except the first and the last, who is Mlle de Rambouillet.

M. de Pisani came into the world fair, white, and straight, but he had his spine displaced in infancy without its being known, and he became so deformed that it was impossible to fashion a breastplate for him. He was spoilt by this circumstance, even to the features of his face, and he remained very small, which seemed the more strange as his father, his mother, and his sisters are all tall. Time was when they used to say, "the fir-trees of Rambouillet," because there were I know not how many brothers of tall stature and none of them ever stout.

But, to make up, M. de Pisani had wit and courage in plenty.



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From fear of being made an ecclesiastic, he was never eager in his studies, and was not even willing to read much in French. He only began to develop some taste for it when those eight orations of Cicero were printed in translation, three by M. d'Ablancourt, and one by M. Patru. These he liked and read constantly. He reasoned as if he held all the logic of the world in his head. He had an agile wit, and among women he was often more welcome than the best shaped figures. In women and gaming he took pleasure to excess. Once, in order to have some money, he persuaded his father and mother, who had only spent one night at Rambouillet in twenty-eight years, that there was some dead wood in the park which ought to be taken away. Thus gaining permission, he had six hundred bundles of the very best wood cut down.

In argument with Monsieur le Prince (they were often in argument), he said: "Make me a prince of the blood in your stead, and have all the reasons in the world on your side: I shall always win over you!" He was eager to follow the prince in all his campaigns, although he was a terrible figure on horseback, the Marquis de Pisani. They used to call him the camel of burden for Monsieur le Prince. In the end he was killed, at the battle of Nördlingen. He was on the Marshal Grammont's flank, which was broken. The Chevalier de Grammont called out to him: "Come this way, Pisani, it's the safest!" But apparently he had no mind to escape in such bad company, for the chevalier was ill-reputed for his courage, and going in another direction he met with some Croats, who slew him.

I must tell one pleasing tale of him. Mme de Rambouillet, whose feelings are extremely fine, used to say that nothing was more ridiculous than a man in bed, and that a night-cap is a mighty foolish head-dress. Mme de Montausier had an even greater dislike for night-caps, but Mlle d'Arquenay, now the abbess of Saint Étienne at Rheims, was the most ardent foe of this hapless head-gear. One day her brother sent to beg her to come into his apartment. No sooner there, than all of a sudden five or six men emerged from an anteroom—all with night-caps; these, indeed, had very white coiffes, for night-caps without such would have been capable of making the lady die of terror. She cried out, and sought to flee. "Heavens, sister!" said he, "think you that I wished to trouble you to come hither for nothing? No, no: you will join me in my meal, I beg." And willy-nilly she had to sit down at table and partake of the meal served to them by these fellows in night-caps!

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After this, until the grave wound he received at Montansais in 1652, the Marquis de Montausier, informed of this aversion, never wore a night-cap when sleeping with his wife, although she begged him to use one. From this comes the saying that the true *précieuse* has a dread of night-caps.

Voiture and M. de Pisani were close friends. On one occasion the latter, during a severe frost, said to someone: "And to think that I have but one shirt!" "Oh, and how do you manage?" said the other." "Manage!" he answered, "I just shiver with cold all the time."

There was a stout beggar-man at one gate of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and one day, as he asked alms of her, Mme de Rambouillet said to M. de Pisani, "You should give something to this poor fellow." "Not likely," said he. "I want to borrow money from him. I've heard that he owns above a thousand crowns."

But let us return to Mme de Rambouillet's pleasure in surprising people.

She had a large room built with three tall windows, looking in three directions, on to the garden of the *Quinze-Vingts* hospital for the blind, on to the garden of the Hôtel de Chevreuse, and on to the garden of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. This she had constructed, painted and furnished without its being noticed by any of the countless persons who were always frequenting the house. The workmen had to cross over the bounding wall to go and work from the other side, for the room projects into the garden of the hospital. Only one person, M. Arnould, had the curiosity to climb upon a ladder which he found leaning against the garden wall, but someone called out to him when he had only reached the second rung, and then it passed out of his mind.

So one evening, then, when there was a great assemblage at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, a sound was heard of a sudden from behind the tapestries, a door opened, and Mlle de Rambouillet, now Mme de Montausier, in a gorgeous dress, was visible in a large and most magnificent apartment, marvellously well lighted. You may imagine every one's surprise. For all they knew, there was nothing behind the tapestried wall but the garden of the *Quinze-Vingts*,<sup>1</sup> and now, without their having the faintest suspicion, they beheld a room, beautiful, well painted, and of considerable size: it seemed to have been brought thither by magic!

A few days later, M. Chapelain secretly had a scroll of vellum

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attached to it; on it was inscribed that ode in which Zyrphea, Queen of Angennes, declares that she has made this bower to shelter Arthénice from the ravaging years: for, as we shall be showing, Mme de Rambouillet had many infirmities. Would anyone have believed, after this, that a gentleman could have been found (and descended, to boot, from no less a one than Godefroy de Bouillon) who had respect neither for Zyrphea nor for the great Arthénice, but actually robbed this chamber, which was called "Zyrphea's Bower," of one of its greatest beauties? For M. de Chevreuse took it into his head to build some sort of wardrobe-room, by which the garden window was blocked. He was reproached for this, but only replied: "'Tis true that M. de Rambouillet is a good neighbour of mine, and that I even owe him my life. But where would he have me put my clothes?" Note that he had forty rooms already!

After the death of M. de Rambouillet, Mme de Montausier converted her father's chamber into an apartment both magnificent and agreeable. When it was completed, she wished to dedicate it, and to this end offered a supper there to her mother. She, her sister Mlle de Rambouillet, and Mme de Saint-Étienne, who was then a religious, waited on her at table, without a single man (not even M. de Montausier) being allowed to enter. Mme de Rambouillet herself also did something to her apartment neither less beautiful nor less finely carried out. And I recall how the mother and daughter used to be told, when so many alcoves and oratories were seen, that every year they took something away from the Hôtel de Chevreuse to avenge the insult done to Zyrphea.

It is time now to speak of the infirmities of Mme de Rambouillet. She has one which ought to be recorded in detail, so to speak; it has made many, who only see things at a distance, believe that it was nothing but imagination.

When Mme de Rambouillet was thirty-five or thereabouts, she noticed that the fire heated her blood in a strange manner, and caused a certain weakness in her. Being fond of warming herself, she did not altogether cease doing so on this account, but, on the contrary, when the cold returned, she was anxious to see whether her weakness would persist. She found that it was worse. She tried again in the following winter, but could no longer approach the fire. A few years later the sun brought on the same troubles in her, but she refused to yield, for no one ever had greater enjoyment in walking and surveying the delight-



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ful parts of the country-side of Paris. But nevertheless she had to renounce these pleasures, in sunshine at least, for once, wishing to go to Saint-Cloud, she had hardly reached the entrance of the Cours when she fainted, and the blood was visibly seen boiling in her veins, for she has a skin of great delicacy.

With age her infirmity grew worse. I have seen her stricken with erysipelas from a stove having been forgetfully left beneath her bed. So here she is, constrained to remain almost always indoors, and never to warm herself. Necessity made her borrow from the Spaniards the device of alcoves, which are so much in vogue in Paris nowadays. The company go and warm themselves in the anteroom. In frosty weather she sits in bed with her legs in a bearskin bag, and she remarks pleasingly, on account of the great mass of head-gear which she wears in winter-time, that she becomes deaf on St Martin's Day, and recovers her hearing at Easter. During the long and severe cold spells of last winter, she took the risk of kindling a small fire in a little fireplace which was fitted into her small alcove room. A great screen was put beside the bed, which, placed further away than usual, only received from it a very tempered heat. But none the less that did not last long, for in the end she was affected by this as well. And this summer, when it was extremely hot, she thought herself like to die of it, although her house was very cool.

On her last visit to Rambouillet, before the barricades, she composed some prayers there for her private use, which are very well written. She gave them to M. Conrart to have them copied by Jarry, the man who imitates printed type, and has the finest handwriting in the world. He caused them to be copied on vellum, and after having them bound as handsomely as he could, he presented them to their author. Jarry made a naïve remark about them. "Pray, sir," said he, "leave me a few of these prayers, for in the Books of Hours which I have to copy sometimes, there are some so foolish that I am ashamed to transcribe them."

On that visit to Rambouillet she carried out something very pretty in the park, but refrained from breaking a word of it to those who were to see it. I was caught like the rest. Chavaroché, the steward of the household, formerly tutor of the Marquis de Pisani, was charged with showing it to me. He led me in very roundaboutwise to a spot where I heard a loud noise, like a great waterfall. Now, I had always heard it said that there was only still water in the grounds of Rambouillet, so



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imagine my surprise when I beheld a cascade, a jet and a sheet of water in the pool into which the cascade fell, then another basin with a great turmoil of water, and at the end of that a large square with a jet of extraordinary height and volume, with yet another expanse leading all this water into the meadowland, where it disappeared. Add to this, that all I have just described is in the shade of the most beautiful trees in the world. All this water came from a great pond in the park, on a higher level than the rest, and she had had it led by a pipe emerging from the earth just so that the cascade burst forth from between the branches of an oak, and the trees behind this had been so cunningly interlaced that it was impossible to detect the pipe. The Marquise caused the work to be hurried on with the utmost diligence, in order to surprise M. de Montausier, who was to go thither. On the eve of his arrival, when darkness fell, they were obliged to place lanterns on the branches and light up the workmen with torches; but, over and above the pleasure she had from the beautiful effect given by all these lights between the leaves of the trees and in the water of the pools and the great square basin, she had a rare joy from the astonishment of the Marquis next day, when so many delights were shown to him.

Mme de Rambouillet has always affected, rather too much, to have the power of divining certain things. She has described to me several matters divined or foretold by her. When the late King was *in extremis*, people kept on saying: "The King will die to-day," and then, "The King will die to-morrow." "No," said she, "he will not die until Ascension Day, as I said a month ago." On the morning of that day he was said to be somewhat better, but she maintained that he would die before the day was out, and in point of fact he did die that evening. (She also told Madame la Princesse that she would be brought to bed on Lady Day.) She could not abide the King. He was singularly displeasing to her, and everything he did seemed to her against all rules of fitness. Mlle de Rambouillet used to say: "I am always afraid lest my mother's aversion from the King may prove her undoing."

She divined once, looking out of the window in the country, that a certain man coming along on horseback was an apothecary. She sent to ask him, and it turned out to be true.

Mme de Rambouillet is somewhat too fond of paying compliments to certain people who are scarcely worth her trouble. But 'tis a fault that few persons have nowadays, for civility hardly exists any longer. She is a shade over-delicate in her taste;

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certain words, in a satire or an epigram, will give her, she says, unpleasant ideas; and there are some which no one would dare to pronounce in her presence. This is carried too far, especially when freedom is the rule. Her husband and she lived rather too much on ceremony.

Except for a slight trembling of the head, which comes of her formerly having eaten ambergis to excess, she is not yet displeasing in person.<sup>2</sup> She has a fine complexion, and foolish folk have declared that it was on this account that she would never come near a fire: as if there were no such things as screens! She said that what she longed for most for her person, would be to be able to warm herself to her heart's content. She went to the country last winter, the weather being neither hot nor cold, but that was a rare happening, and it was but half a league out of Paris. An illness turned her lips an ugly colour, and thereafter she always applied rouge to them. I should have preferred her to leave them untouched. Otherwise, her mind is as clear and her memory as sound as if she were but thirty.

It is from her that I have had the greatest and best part of all I have written, and shall write, in this book. She reads a whole day long without the slightest distress, and this is her chief diversion. I find her rather too well persuaded (to say nothing worse) that the family of the Savellis is the best in the world.

<sup>1</sup> More strictly, it was an enclosure behind the garden. She managed things so well that she was permitted to plant an alley of sycamores under her windows, and to sow hay under them. She boasts of being the only person in Paris who can see, from her window, a field being scythed. [T.]

<sup>2</sup> She lived to be seventy-eight years of age, and had nothing repellent about her. [T.]

# MADAME DE MONTAUSIER AND HER DAUGHTER<sup>1</sup>



THE name of Madame de Montausier is Julie Lucine d'Angennes. Lucine is the name of a saint who belonged to the Savelli family. Her mother and grandmother both bore it, and it was customary in the family for this name to be added to that given to the daughters at baptism.

After Helen, there has scarcely been anyone whose beauty has been more widely sung. But she was never a beauty. True, she has still a commanding figure. In her youth, it is said, she was not too thin, and had a fine complexion. This being so, I am willing to believe that, dancing admirably as she does, and always having wit and grace, she was an extremely lovable person. Her portraits will give evidence of what I have just said.

She has had lovers of various kinds, Voiture and M. de Montausier himself the chief ones. Voiture was rather a suitor by gallantry, more for amusement than anything, and had to put up with many a rebuff from her. But M. de Montausier languished with a constancy that lasted more than thirteen years. The letters of Voiture, his verses, those of M. Arnauld, all speak constantly of the marvellous spirit of Mlle de Rambouillet. Mlle de Bourbon, who was much younger and still but a child, used to torment her every day to tell her stories, and Mlle de Rambouillet, having exhausted all the tales she had managed to find, thought then of composing one of her own. Whereupon she wrote that tale of *Zélide and Alcidalis* which is several times mentioned in Voiture's letters. It is said that she invented it during a sleepless night, and that Voiture undertook to put it into writing. He did the greater part of it, but I have not yet been able to see it, as it was taken by some carelessness to Angoulême. It could scarcely be well written, for Voiture was incapable

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of any style other than one of mockery or light-hearted gallantry. I am assured that there is nothing better so far as invention goes: and if this is so, and the story falls into my hands, I shall try to reshape it or fashion it completely afresh.

Three or four years before he married her, M. de Montausier sent her *Julia's Garland*. This is one of the most splendid pieces of gallant courtship that ever was. All its flowers were illuminated upon vellum, and the verses also written upon vellum, following each flower, and the whole in that beautiful script of Jarry I spoke of. The frontispiece of the book is a garland, in the middle of which is the title:

JULIA'S GARLAND,

FOR

MADEMOISELLE DE RAMBOUILLET,

JULIE LUCINE D'ANGENNES.

And on the following page is a Zephyr scattering flowers. The book is all covered with monograms of Mlle de Rambouillet, and is bound inside the covers as well as out with Levant morocco, instead of there being only marbled paper inside, as other books have. Over this there is a covering of frangipani.

Mlle de Rambouillet received this offering, and even thanked all those who had penned verses for her. There was nobody, even to the Marquis de Rambouillet himself, who had not done so. A madrigal (of sorts) of her father's is to be found there. Only Voiture, who did not like a crowd, did not write a madrigal of some kind. True, he and M. de Montausier never saw exactly eye to eye, but his silence was not due to that circumstance only, for on the death of the Marquis de Pisani, his great friend, he wrote nothing either, although so many people composed verses thereon.

[M. de Montausier and Mlle de Rambouillet were married in 1645.]

Let us say something of their little daughter. This child, for she is still but eleven years old, has said the most charming things ever since she was weaned.

One day a fox belonging to M. de Grasse was brought to her father's. As soon as she saw it, she clasped her necklace tight, and, being asked why, replied: "For fear the fox will rob me: they're so clever in Æsop's fables."





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And a few months later she was told, "Look, here is the fox's master: what do you think of him?"

"Oh," said she, "he looks to me even cleverer than his fox."

When she was perhaps six years old, M. de Grasse asked her how long her big doll had been weaned.

"And how long since you were?" she asked, "for you're scarcely any bigger yourself."

On account of her aunt's smallpox, she was placed in a neighbouring house. A lady who saw her there asked her: "And your dolls, mademoiselle? Did you leave them in that infected air?"

"The big ones, madame," she answered, "I did not take away; but I brought the little ones with me."

Speaking of dolls, the little Des Réaux child once went to see her, when she was perhaps seven years old. The former is a couple of years younger. Mlle de Montausier made as if to treat the other as a mere child, and said to her as she displayed her dolls to her: "Come, let's put this one to sleep."

"Oh," said the other, "I know what you mean by that."

"No, no," she went on. "They really *do* sleep, you know."

"Pooh!" replied the other, "I know quite well that dolls don't sleep a bit."

"Oh, but they *do*: they really sleep, believe me. It's as true as true."

"Oh, very well, then," said the little Des Réaux girl, "they *do* sleep, if you like." And as she came away, she said: "I won't go back there: she takes me for a child!"

To a gentleman, a friend of her father's, she said once: "I don't want you to kiss me in imagination only."

On her repeating often the same story, Mme de Montausier said to her: "Fi! where did you learn that?"

"Wait a minute," said the child, "wasn't it from grand-mamma Montausier?" Which turned out to be true.

She used to say that she wanted to write a comedy. "But, grandmamma," she added, "we must get Corneille to run an eye through it before we play it."

A certain page of her father's was overfond of the bottle, and one day got drunk. Next day she was eager to reprimand him herself. "You see," she said to him, "in all this kind of thing, I am just like papa: you'll find nothing to choose between us."

She was bidden "to eat up this soup for my sake."

"I'll take it," said she, "for my own sake, and not for yours."

## MME DE MONTAUSIER AND HER DAUGHTER

One day she took a little chair and seated herself beside the bed of Mme de Rambouillet. "Now then, grandmamma," she said, "let us have a talk about matters of state, now that I'm five years old." True, at that time there was very little talk except about the Fronde.

M. de Nemours, then Archbishop of Rheims, told her that he wanted to marry her. "Monsieur," said she, "you had better keep your archbishopric: 'tis worth more than me."

She was only five years old when someone wanted her to hold an infant at the font. The *curé* of Saint-Germain refused to let her, saying that she was not yet seven. "Question her," they said to him. Which he did before a hundred persons, and she answered with great assurance. He accepted her and praised her very highly.

One day she was lying in bed with Mme de Rambouillet, and M. de Montausier wanted to touch her. "Stop, papa," she said, "gentlemen do not put their hands in grandmamma's bed."

She was the consolation of her poor grandmother when the latter lived alone in Paris. On the death of M. de Rambouillet, the child was deeply touched to see her so sad. "Take comfort, grandmamma," said she, "it is God's will: do you not wish the will of God to be done?" Of her own accord she bethought her of having masses said for him. "Oh!" said her governess, "if your poor grandfather, who loved you so much, could only know that!" "Oh, but how should he not know?" she said, "is he not with God?"

When barely nine, she read the Feast of Flowers in *Cyrus*, and thought she would give a representation of it with the girls of the house. So, when Mme de Rambouillet was furthest from having such thoughts in her head, this child, to afford her some diversion, came with her companions, all in garlands, and heaped up at her feet a veritable mound of flowers.

It is a pity that she has a cast in her eyes, for her mind is as straight as could be. Otherwise, she is well made and tall. Latterly, she has spoilt herself somewhat, in mind and body.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts only from a fairly long *Historiette*—and chosen chiefly for the sake of Madame's little daughter.

## MADAME DE MONTBAZON



LDEST daughter of the Comte de Vertus and his countess, Marie de Bretagne was still very young and was under religious vows, when old Montbazon married her. From this second circumstance he used always to call her "my little nun." He wrote a letter about it to the Queen-Mother, or rather he copied one, for it was so sensible that it must have been written by a cleverer hand than his. The substance of it was that he knew well what lot this threatened to a man of his age, but that he hoped the example given by Her Majesty would always keep her within the bounds of duty, etc.

She was one of the most beautiful persons one could see, and a great ornament to the Court. She outdid all others at the ball, and in the opinion of the Poles, at the marriage of Princess Marie, she still bore off the palm, although more than thirty-five years of age. But for my own part, I would not have shared their opinion: she had a large nose and her mouth was rather deeply set; she was a colossus, and even at that date was already growing too stout, and was too buxom by half, and although her bosom was white and firm enough, it was no whit the less conspicuous for that. She had a very white complexion and very dark hair, and a great majesty of bearing.

In her extreme youth, at the time she appeared at Court, she used to declare that one was good for nothing at thirty, and that when she reached that age she wished to be flung into the river. You may guess whether she lacked admirers. M. de Chevreuse, son-in-law of M. de Montbazon, was one of the earliest: on which circumstance there was a song ending thus:

*Mais il fait cocu son beau-père  
Et lui dépense tout son bien.  
Tout en disant ses patenôtres,  
Il fait ce que lui font les autres.*

## MADAME DE MONTBAZON

M. de Montmorency sang the couplets to M. de Chevreuse in the Court of the King's house: at Saint-Germain, I think it was. "'Tis too much!" exclaimed M. de Chevreuse, and drew his sword. The other did likewise, but the guards did not treat them as they had the power to do, on account of their position, and they were mollified. M. d'Orléans loved her, and likewise the Comte de Soissons. He once made a tale of it to the Princesse de Guémené, the daughter-in-law of M. de Montbazon and rival of the duchess. She made him promise, according to what I have been told, to play a trick on Mme de Guémené, which was, to make pretence of having just that instant donned his clothes when some people were coming in. He did so, and afterwards asked the fair one's pardon for it.

Bassompierre attempted her conquest, but could have nothing for his pains: why, I know not.

Hocquincourt, now Marshal of France, is among those who have been most spoken of. When the enemy took Corbie, there was a rumour abroad that Piccolomini had declared that if he reached Paris he desired Mme de Montbazon for his booty. So, to have the laugh against this true son of Picardy, who was for ever making declarations and who has no common sense, a written challenge was drawn up from Hocquincourt to the Imperial general, with the reply. The challenge read as follows:

*M. d'Hocquincourt*, governor of Péronne, Montdidier and Roye,

to *Piccolomini*, lieutenant-general of the armies of the Emperor in Flanders:

Know that, unable longer to tolerate the cruelties practised within my regions of governance, I desire to obtain satisfaction by the effusion of your blood. I have chosen the spot whereat I wish to see you, sword in hand. My trumpeter shall lead you thither. Fail not to attend there, if you are a man of honour, with a blade of four feet to put an end to our differences.

And the reply:

*Monsieur d'Hocquincourt*, remain in your governance. I could wish for my satisfaction that you had been present, as I have, at eleven battles and three-score and twelve sieges of cities, so as to see you at a spot where I never was but with delight, and whence I never returned but with the advantage.



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But, in the state in which you are, I cannot hazard my reputation against you without injuring that of my master who has entrusted me with his armies. I have in my forces two hundred captains, the very least of whom would deem it beneath him to come to grips with you.

None the less, if you are obstinate in your purpose, someone will be found who, in my estimation, will swallow his self-esteem to that point.

Farewell, Monsieur d'Hocquincourt. Bate not your vigilance. You know that I am not far from you, and that I am as apt at surprising a position as at commanding an army.

This same M. d'Hocquincourt, having gained the aid of a serving-maid, placed himself under the bed of his fair one. But by ill-luck old Montbazon happened to be in a pleasant humour that evening, and came to bed with his wife. But he had some little spaniels who forthwith sniffed out the gallant, and forced him to emerge from his hiding-place. For such a fool as he was, he got out of the embarrassment well enough. "Indeed, my lord," said he, "I had hidden myself to know whether you were as good company as they say!"

When he began to win her favour, he told her, in the fashion of his countrymen, that he had no idea of being the bashful lover, and that he must make an end at once, or seek his fortune elsewhere. It is the correct way with a woman who has always taken money or finery.

Roville was the next who left a good many feathers behind him, and it has been said that Bonnel Bullion had been accepted for his money: a satiric verse placed the price at five hundred crowns.

When the Duke of Weimar came here for the first time, he was talking with the Queen on how he disposed of the booty, and declared that he left it all to the soldiery and the officers. "But," said the Queen to him, "suppose you were to take some fair lady, Mme de Montbazon, for instance?" "Ho, ho!" he answered with a malicious air, and in his German accent, "that would be a vine vench for the cheneral!"

One day she had the present M. de Soubise served up at table in a bowl: he was a very fine infant, and was called the Comte de Rochefort.

One dared not say for certain that she painted herself, but one day at the Hôtel de Ville, when it was mighty hot weather,

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the Queen noticed something trickling down her face. It is said, however, that she only put on the white on occasions of solemnity, and that she removed it as soon as she returned. Her intrigues and love affairs with M. de Beaufort, and her death, will be found in my memoirs of the Regency. But I add here that once, finding herself with child after she had borne enough, she rushed at a gallop in a coach all over Paris, and said: "There, I have just broken a child's neck."

There was a certain rhymester and singer, an extravagant character of the name of d'Enhaut, who fell in love with her. She was having a tooth pulled one day, when he cried: "O wretched mortal that I am! All my teeth are in my head, and one is to be torn from this divinity!" Forthwith he went and had sixteen of them pulled out!

## MONSIEUR DE MONTBAZON



OF large build, M. de Montbazon, Hercule de Rohan, was a fine figure of a man, and in his youth was very active. He had constructed a building at Rochefort, a couple of leagues from Paris, the most extravagant creation that ever was; it is a card-castle, with a multitude of little turrets, lantern-towers, sentry-boxes and little platforms: there is nothing appropriate in the whole thing except the *horns* which are to be seen everywhere; they fit the master of the house in more ways than one, for he was the chief huntsman of France.

In showing this house to people, he used to press the tip of his finger against his forehead and say: "And here is the man who built it." There is a portrait in the gallery in which he appears with his father, who was blind, pointing a finger heavenwards with a half-line of Virgil's: *Disce puer, virtutem*. Well, this *puer* had the bushiest beard, very nearly, that ever I set eyes on, and looked a full forty-five years old. Being a very simple man, and one who said many foolish things, he was saddled, and the Duc d'Uzès also, with everything that was said in the wrong place. (Of the Duc d'Uzès it is affirmed that he was asked once by the Queen when his wife would be brought to bed, and answered: "When it may please your Majesty.") He was so foolish as to go and tell the late King that the Queen and Mme de Chevreuse were reading the *Cabinet Satirique*.

"Madame," he said to the Queen, "let me go and find my wife; she is awaiting me, and as soon as she hears a horse, she thinks 'tis myself."

He heard that in speaking of Saint Paul the phrase, "this great vessel of election," was added; whereupon he imagined that it was a large vessel called the *Election*, on board which this apostle journeyed. "I think," said he, "the good ship *Election* of Saint Paul must have been a fine vessel indeed."

The old fool, at the age of eighty, fell in love with a girl

## MONSIEUR DE MONTBAZON

who played with skill upon the lute. She confided the story to Mme de Montbazon. The good man begged Mlle de Clisson, his wife's sister, to provide a dinner for the damsel and himself, but declared that, as she had only one kitchen woman, he would send her his cook with everything necessary. But all he sent her was one small rabbit, and he brought eleven people to her board. She knew his ways well, however, and did not let herself be taken unawares. Mme de Montbazon retired to bed, and the damsel went, on purpose, to where she was, on pretence of going to find her bed. He followed her and sat down. "Come and kiss me," he said. "Come yourself," said she. He repeated it, but she was immovable. He broke into such a fury that he would have thrown her out of the window if he had had the strength. Within a few years of that, he lost his head over the daughter of his lodge-keeper at Rochefort, and the child (she was no more) was constrained to do his will: but hardly was she in bed before he made her rise again, reproaching her for not having said her prayers. The Marshal d'Ornano would not have anything to do with a virgin, or with a woman of the name of Mary, from the respect he bore towards the Mother of God. It is said that he asked someone: "I know not what more I can do to win Mme de Montbazon: suppose I were to beat her a little?"

The good M. de Montbazon could never enter the Louvre without asking what o'clock it was. Once he was told "eleven o'clock," and thereupon he burst out laughing. "He would have had a fine laugh," said M. de Candale, "if they had told him it was twelve o'clock!"

On the door of a stable at Rochefort he had this inscription placed: "On the Twenty-fifth Day of October, in the Year One Thousand Six Hundred and Thirty-seven, I caused this Door to be made, for entering into my Stable."

He died five or six years before his wife.



## THE CARDINAL RICHELIEU



HE father of Cardinal Richelieu was a gentleman of good standing. He was the chief provost of the Hôtel and chevalier of the Order, but he put his household into dire confusion. He had three sons and two daughters, the elder of whom was married to a gentleman of Poitou, Vignerot by name, who was a man *dubiæ nobilitatis*; he advanced himself at Court, however, and was always seen about with the great lords; he used to play with M. de Créqui and M. de Bassompierre. The other daughter married the Marquis de Brézé, later a marshal of France. The eldest of the sons was a well-made man, and not lacking in wit. He was ambitious, and wanted to spend more than he could. He affected to pass for one of "the seventeen lords," as the seventeen most prominent courtiers were then called.

His wife, it is said, on being asked by a tailor in which style he should fashion a dress for her, replied: "Do it as for the lady of one of the seventeen lords." But, although he made great play of lordship, and in fact was of good origins, he did not pass for a man of quality: and this is a reason why Cardinal Richelieu had such a concern for his nobility and his birth. This M. de Richelieu won good standing for himself with Henry IV, who wanted to know everything, recounting to the King the happenings of the Court and the town, for he took special care to be informed thereupon. He was slain in a duel with the Marquis de Thémynes, son of the marshal, at Angoulême, when the Queen-Mother was there, and left no children. The second son was Cardinal of Lyons, and the third, Cardinal Richelieu.

Their father had had his second son presented with the bishopric of Luçon (a see of small worth), but he abandoned this in order to become a Carthusian. The third son, destined for the Church, stepped into the bishopric in his brother's stead. When on the benches of the Sorbonne, he was ambitious enough

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to take a step without precedent: he dedicated his theses to King Henry IV, and, although he was very young, he promised the King in this letter to render him great services if ever he were employed. It was noticed that he was ever seeking to advance himself, and that he always sought to have the control of affairs in his hands. (He went to Rome and was there consecrated as bishop. The Pope asked him if he were of canonical age. He answered yes; and afterwards asked the Pope's absolution for having told him that he was of proper age, when in reality he was not. "This young man," said the pontiff, "will be a great rogue.")

The States-General of 1614, wherein he was deputy for the clergy of Poitou, gave him an opening for the winning of a reputation. He delivered several speeches which were found admirable; at that time there was little familiarity with these things.

After the death of Henry IV, Barbin, the comptroller of the treasury, who was a friend of Richelieu's, had him made secretary of state through the Marshal d'Ancre. A rather spiteful historian, named Toussaint Le Grain, in his history of the regency of Marie de Medici, says that my lord of Luçon was the first person whom the King met in the gallery after the Marshal d'Ancre had been slain, and that he said to the bishop, "And so I am delivered from your tyranny, my lord of Luçon!" And when this was mentioned to Cardinal Richelieu, who had come to be all-powerful, he thought it worth his while to suppress this history. He had the copies sought out with great care, and his search led to every one buying the book, and to people knowing what otherwise would perhaps never have come to their ears or eyes.

When the Queen-Mother was relegated to Blois, my lord of Luçon was relegated to Avignon, that there should be no communications between them. But when the late M. d'Espèrnon brought the Queen to Angoulême, my lord of Luçon appeared on the scene. It was there that he and the Abbé de Ruccelai, a Florentine, were rivals during ten or twelve days for the Queen-Mother's favour, and the abbé was on the point of gaining over the bishop, had not M. d'Espèrnon, paramount in that little court, opposed the Queen's inclination with all his strength.

The "folly" of Ponts-de-Cé came next. Baron de Fœneste makes mock of it pleasantly enough, and the title given to this fine expedition is good evidence that it was only a fire of straw.

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Bautru, of whom we shall have enough to say later on, and who had a regiment of foot in the Queen-Mother's service, says that when the wedding was celebrated between Mlle du Pont-de-Comlay and Combalet, to assure the friendship between MM. de Luynes and my lord of Luçon, the cannon on the King's side said "*Combalet*," and those on the Queen-Mother's said "*Pont-de-Comlay*."

M. de Luynes, against whom the Jesuit Father Arnoul was beginning to do a bad turn with the King, died, and Father Suffren, another Jesuit, confessor to the Queen-Mother, so terrified the King for the treatment that had been meted out to the Queen-Mother, that he already fancied the Devil had him by the collar—for never did anyone love God less or fear Satan more than did His late Majesty. So these two confessors brought mother and son back to each other, and by this means my lord of Luçon became insensibly the head of affairs, and had the cardinal's hat.

When he had the Marshal d'Ornano arrested at Fontainebleau, Monsieur, whose tutor the marshal was, went at ten o'clock in the evening to vent his wrath in the King's chamber, frightening him, and telling him that he wished to know on whose counsel it had been done. The King said it was on his own counsel. Whereupon Monsieur sought out the chancellor, Aligre, who answered trembling that it was not he. So back came Monsieur, and stormed afresh. The King, not knowing what to tell him, sent for the Cardinal, who said at once, and with assurance, that it was he who advised the King to have the Marshal d'Ornano arrested. "You filthy hellhound," said Monsieur, and with these fine words walked off.

The Cardinal detested Monsieur, and feared lest, with the poor health of the King, he might wear the crown. So he planned to win over the Queen and to help her to produce a dauphin. Towards this end he put her on bad terms with the King and with the Queen-Mother, without her knowing how this arose, to such a point that she was sorely ill-treated by one and then the other. Then, through Mme de Fargis, lady of the wardrobe, he let her know that if she so desired he would soon help her out of her present misery. The Queen, in no way believing that it was he who caused her ill-treatment, imagined at first that his help was proffered from pity for her lot, suffered him to write to her, and even responded, for she did not think that the intercourse would lead to anything but a simple piece of gallantry.



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The Cardinal now saw a certain advance in his plan, and proposed to her, through this same Mme du Fargis, that she should consent to his taking the King's place beside her, pointing out that if she had no children she would always be despised, and that, as the King's health could not allow him the prospect of a long life, she would soon be sent back to Spain. On the other hand, if she had a son by the Cardinal, and the King were to die soon, as was a certainty, she would rule along with him, for his interests and hers would be identical, he being the father of her child. As for the Queen-Mother, he would remove her to a distance as soon as he received the favour he asked.

Emphatically, the Queen rejected this proposal; but it was not desirable to enrage the Cardinal. He did all he could to have sight of her once in bed, but could not gain his end.

(M. de La Rochefoucauld says that the Cardinal was deeply in love with the Queen, and in his fury he wanted her repudiation, but that Mme d'Aiguillon prevented this. The Queen was accused of communications with Mirabel, the Spanish Ambassador, and Séguier, keeper of the seals, not only questioned her, but even searched her, in a fashion; for he put his hand into her gown to see if she had not any letters, at least he looked in there and almost touched her breast with his hand. In the despair which he inflicted on her, she had once determined to take flight for Brussels. The Prince de Marsillac, then a youth of twenty, later M. de La Rochefoucauld of the Fronde, was to take her behind him on horseback; Mme d'Hautefort was of the party; Mme de Chevreuse, already banished to Tours, was to escape into Spain if she was sent a Book of Hours bound in red—if she was sent one bound in green, she was to stay where she was. But the Queen decided not to go off; Mme d'Hautefort, by accident, or having forgotten what the arrangement was, sent off the red Hours. This was the cause of Mme de Chevreuse disguising herself as a man, and going to the Prince de Marsillac's house. He provided her with an escort of men. This was also the cause of Marsillac's being imprisoned for some time. Later, the Cardinal showed him favour and made him an offer to receive him into the number of his friends. Marsillac did not dare to accept this without the Queen's consent, which she did not grant him.)

During this intrigue of the Cardinal, the Queen-Mother cherished such a jealousy of the Queen that she quarrelled with him outright. The Queen-Mother was anxious for domination, and had had the King brought up in such a way that he was



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incapable of performing his duties for himself. (Not once during the whole regency did she embrace the King.) She had been afraid lest the Queen should have any mastery over his mind, and, to prevent this princess from seeking to win her husband's affection, she caused to be put by her side Mme de Chevreuse and Mme de La Vallette, two of the lightest heads to be found at Court. Princess de Conti had also orders from the Queen-Mother to keep an eye on all that went on around the Queen, and she, although an old woman, had still some thoughts of love in her head, and was pleased that gallantry reigned. It was she who taught the Queen her coquetry.

There was talk at that time of the marriage of the Queen of England. Lord Carlisle and Lord Holland, who were sent here to treat of the match, told Buckingham, the King's favourite, a man of romantical notions, that France had a Queen both young and gallant, who would make a fine conquest. Thereafter there was some communication between them, with Mme de Chevreuse, to whom Lord Holland told the matter, as go-between, and the upshot was that when Buckingham arrived for the Queen of England's wedding, the Queen-regnant was quite disposed to receive him with favour. Certain gallantries passed, but what was most bruited was an occasion when, the Court having gone to Amiens to be so much the nearer to the coast, Buckingham had the Queen quite alone in a garden: at least, there was nobody but Mme du Vernet, sister of the late M. de Luyne, a mistress of the Queen's wardrobe; but she was cognisant of what was going forward and had removed herself to a certain distance. The gallant duke used force against the Queen: her person bore the marks of his brodered garments: but in vain, for she cried out so often that the lady of the wardrobe, who was turning a deaf ear, was obliged to run to the rescue. (A few days afterwards, the Queen-regnant having stayed behind at Amiens, either because she was indisposed or because to accompany the Queen of England to the coast would only have been embarrassing, Buckingham, who had taken his leave of the Queen like the others, turned back when he had gone three leagues. Nothing was further from the Queen's thoughts, when suddenly she saw him kneeling by the head of her bed. He stayed there awhile, kissed the edge of the sheets, and went away.)

The Cardinal grew suspicious of all the gallantries of Buckingham, and prevented him from returning to France as ambassador-extraordinary, as had been his plan. Unable to do any better, he came there with a naval force to attack the Île de Ré.

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On his arrival he captured a gentleman of Saintonge, Saint-Surin by name, an able and intelligent man, and one who knew a good deal of the Court. He showed him the greatest civility, and, disclosed to him his love, brought him into the finest cabin of his ship. The apartment was heavily gilded, the floor covered with Persian rugs, and there was a kind of altar on which was the portrait of the Queen, with several lighted candles. Afterwards he restored the gentleman to liberty, on condition that he went and told the Cardinal that Buckingham would retire and hand over La Rochelle, agreeing beforehand, in a word, to any terms whatsoever, provided that a promise were given of his acceptance as ambassador to France. He gave him instructions also to speak on his behalf to the Queen. Saint-Surin came to Paris, and did as he had promised. He spoke to the Cardinal, who threatened to have his throat cut if he spoke further of these matters. Later, when the Queen learned of the death of Buckingham, she was manifestly affected by the news. At first she refused to believe a word of it, and kept saying, "I have just had letters from him."

Apparently the Cardinal already had in his head what I am now going to recount. On the journey from Lyons, when the King was so ill, the Queen-Mother beseeched the King, as a favour, to dismiss the Cardinal. He promised her that he would get rid of him when the German peace was concluded, but said he had need of him until then. On his recovery the King went off to Roanne, the Queen-Mother remaining at Lyons on account of a pain in her foot. From Roanne the King wrote to her that she should be restored to health, that he would soon give her satisfaction, that the German peace was concluded, and that he was sending the ratification of this.

(As a blind, he made up a council, and appointed Saint-Chaumont a minister of state, for he did not want any men of strength on it. Saint-Chaumont imagined that he was thus honoured on account of his merits, and was vastly pleased. Meeting Gordes, the captain of the bodyguard, he told him of his appointment. "Ho, ho!" said Gordes, "you're jesting!" And laughing uproariously, he went in and said to the King: "Sire, Saint-Chaumont says that your Majesty has made him a minister: some fool may believe that!")

So delighted was the Queen-Mother with this news from the King that in her excitement she had some bundles of wood burnt, as it were a bonfire. The Cardinal knew it was she who had made this fire, and had his suspicions that something was in

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the air. He pressed the King, who admitted everything, and the Queen-Mother came to Roanne. The Cardinal approached her while she was taking communion in church, and made a sign to Saint-Germain to retire, he, as private chaplain, being near to her. He adjured her to pardon him. She rebuffed him, but he said to her: "Madame, I can make much else perish with myself." From this came the rupture without rhyme or reason of the Peace of Ratisbon. At Lyons, everybody—all the cabals, that is to say—was against the Cardinal. On returning, he had the Marshal de Marillac arrested, and the keeper of the seals was taken to Angoulême; M. de Châteauneuf had the keeping of the seals. This infuriated the Queen-Mother. The Cardinal had approaches made to her more than once, and when the first president of Verdun told her that His Eminence had wept over this five different times, she answered: "It is no surprise to me: he weeps whenever he wants to." Bonneuil, too, who presented the ambassadors, a man of piety but always in adoration of the ministry, and commonly called "the pious courtier," told the Queen-Mother that he had found the Cardinal so shattered and so altered as to be unrecognisable. She said that he changed as he wished, and that having appeared gay one moment, he appeared half-dead the next. However, there was a reconciliation of some kind. A short time afterwards came the great cabal of the two queens, of Monsieur and the whole house of Guise. In despair, the Cardinal wanted to retire, but Cardinal La Vallette put heart into him again. M. de Rambouillet won Monsieur, and as the Cardinal was believed to be lost, the King declared himself for him. This is what was called the "Day of Dupes." It was on Saint Martin's Day, on the return from La Rochelle.

Mme du Fargis was dismissed on account of her cabals, and not on account of her gallantries. She had allied herself with Vaultier and Beringhen, now master of the small stables. For some time she remained hidden in the neighbourhood of Paris, but she was soon discovered, and forced to go further away.

I shall set down here what I know of Vaultier. A certain Franciscan, Father Crochard, who followed M. de La Rocheguyon everywhere, had him as a servant, he being a poor lad. Mme de Guercheville made him a household physician with the Queen-Mother, with a salary of three hundred *livres*. Well, when she was at Angoulême, and when de Lorme had left her at Aigres, in token of which he used to say, in his manner, that she had said to him words more *bitter*<sup>1</sup> than the place they were



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said at, she had need of a physician. None was to be found but Vaultier, whose praises were sung by someone whom he had treated with success. He cured her of an erysipelas, and afterwards succeeded so well and ingratiated himself so much with her, that he was more in her favour than anyone else. Whence came the Cardinal's great hatred towards him. He was a large, well-built man, but with heavy shoulders, and had a very important manner. He came from Arles. His mother made a living by spinning, and it was said that he never helped her.

Cardinal Richelieu, in his feigned design to make one more reconciliation with the Queen-Mother, sent for Vitray, now the printer to the clergy, a man of good sense and claiming friendship with Vaultier. He begged Vitray to exchange messages from one side to the other. Vitray beseeched him to dispense him from the duty, saying that often humble associates were sacrificed to appease great powers. "No," replied the Cardinal. "Have no fear." "Well," said Vitray, "since you wish me to have this honour, do not leave me to surmise: tell me things in all frankness." "Go and tell Vaultier that," added the Cardinal. There were many comings and goings, and at last the matter reached the point of the Cardinal telling Vaultier, through Vitray, that there must be an interview at the house of Vitray himself, and that, for fear of too much being noticeable, Father Joseph would go in his place. But Vaultier answered: "It is a trap. Afterwards the Cardinal will certainly warn the Queen-Mother of this conversation, and tell her that I have dealings with him or with his people. I should not be able," he added, "to prevent the Queen-Mother from going to Compiègne."

Well, the Cardinal could ask nothing better than that Her Majesty should be so foolish as to go to Compiègne, although he made pretence of just the opposite, and would have offered everything to Vaultier, resolving to go as far even as a cardinal's hat. For the Queen-Mother desired to rule, and was not content merely with giving posts and benefices and having as much money as she wanted. The Princess de Conti, and through her all the family of Guise and M. de Bellegarde, pressed her without ceasing to ruin the Cardinal. She went then to Compiègne. There she was stopped, and Vaultier was ordered to return to Paris. On the way he was taken and brought to the Bastille. The Cardinal let Vitray know that he was greatly pleased with his enterprise, and that he might see his friend as often as he pleased. "I shall take good care not to," he answered. "He is one who has had the misfortune to fall into the ill-favour of



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the Prince: I shall serve him enough without visiting him." The Cardinal told him to go thither freely, and that he had nothing to fear for himself. So he went. Vaultier said to him: "I am very low at the moment, but some day I shall be the chief physician to the King." This actually came about, but not as he meant, for he thought it would be to the late King, whereas it has been to a king not then born. We have seen him rich, with twenty thousand crowns of income, living a rascally life, and taking money from the sick whom he saw. Latterly he grew ashamed of this and took no more.

To finish what I know of the Queen-Mother, I shall add that even at Brussels she could not be safe from the devices of the Cardinal designed to remove her further away; for she was still near enough to be constantly making cabals against him. He gave her to believe that if she broke with the Spaniards, he would have her come back. So she feigned to go off to Spa, and two thousand Dutch horse came to take her. It is said that at this time her only goal was to enjoy the Luxembourg and the Cours which she had had planted, without interfering with anything. And so she foolishly left Brussels, where she was well treated by the Spaniards, who allowed her twelve thousand crowns a month, which was very handsome payment for her, and thereafter she did nothing but wander and scrape along in poverty. Saint-Germain knew nothing of the Queen-Mother's design. The Cardinal-Infanta was persuaded and gave him, to live on, a provostship with twelve thousand *livres* income; perhaps he wished him to have it to make him write against the Cardinal. On the death of Cardinal Richelieu, this man came back to Paris, for he had as much revenue already from another provostship in Provence, and did not want to enjoy that in Flanders, so that he could not be accused of having commerce with the enemy. He lives here with his sister, to whom he allows a pension of twelve thousand *livres*. He has still three thousand *livres* income from elsewhere, and when he receives something from his appointments, for he holds I know not what employment or some pension, he distributes it to the two daughters of this sister. He will not dispose of his two provostships, because, he declares, it would be usurping the rights of those who grant such benefices.

The worthy d'Espernon had been among the stoutest, but at last he was forced to own he was worsted, and came on horseback to Montauban to see the Cardinal. "You see," he said to him, "this poor old man." The Cardinal bore him a grudge

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because he had once said, when someone found him with a breviary, during the siege of La Rochelle, "Well, we must needs do other men's duties, since they do ours." And he alarmed the Cardinal greatly at Bordeaux, for he went to see him with two hundred gentlemen in his train, and the Cardinal was alone in bed. The latter never forgave him this. This good man, when the Cardinal was made *generalissimo* in Italy, remarked that the King had retained for himself nothing but the power of healing scrofula; and when M. d'Effiat was made Marshal of France, he said to him: "Well, well, M. d'Effiat, and here you are, a Marshal of France. In my day they only made a very few—but they were good ones."

The Cardinal, in order to secure the Admiralty and to be absolute master on sea as well as on land, had it bruited abroad that several Spanish galleons of the Indies fleet had been lost off Bayonne, and informed the King accordingly. At the same time several persons, duly posted for the purpose, remarked to His Majesty that, through there being nobody responsible for shipwrecks, all the cargo of these galleons would be lost, and that a supreme chief of navigation was surely essential; and forthwith they began casting around to see who could best undertake such duties satisfactorily; and after a number of names had been mentioned, they could find none but the Cardinal capable of the office; and succeeded in inducing the King to mention it to him. His Majesty proposed it to the Cardinal, who began by saying that he was already overburdened, that he would sink under the load, and so had himself warmly beseeched to undertake it. This office rendered that of Admiral useless and superfluous, and M. de Montmorency, who was Admiral of the Western Ocean, was glad to come to an agreement about his office. M. de Guise, who held that post for the Mediterranean, made more ceremony of it, and in the end they relieved him of his Admiralty, and of the governance of Provence as well.

The Cardinal could not stomach any reflection that he was not sprung of a great house, and nothing was ever so much present to his mind as that.

The elder Hocquincourt made suit to be named chancellor of the order; whereupon Richelieu said to him: "Really! What a great honour!" "But it was that dignity," answered the other, "which made your father a knight." He was none the better welcomed at Court for that!

The grand-prior de la Porte noticed that Cardinal Richelieu did not hold out his hand in his house to the Prince of Piedmont,

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later Duke of Savoy, and said out loud: "Who would ever have thought that the grandson of the advocate would pass by the grandson of Charles the Fifth?"

At the siege of La Rochelle, M. de la Rochefoucauld, then the governor of Poitou, received an order to assemble all the nobility of his province. In four days' time he gathered together fifteen hundred gentlemen, and said to the King: "Sire, there is not one of them but is a kinsman of mine." Whereupon M. d'Estissac, a young relative, said to him: "You've made a clumsy mistake, kinsman. The Cardinal's nephews are still only a lot of louts, and you're making your own gallows. Keep an eye on your governance!" And in the very next month, the Cardinal had him relieved thereof, and gave the province to a man who had not so much standing. This was Parabelle.

When the Duke of Weimar came to Paris, the Comte de Parabelle, a foolish enough fellow, went to see him like any other, and had the impertinence to ask him why he had given battle at Nördlingen. The Duke whispered in Marshal de la Meilleraye's ear: "Who is this coxcomb with the *cordons bleus*?" "He is a foolish kind of creature," said the Marshal. "Pay no heed to his words." "But why was he given the *cordons bleus*, then?" "He was not quite so extravagant at the time!"

The compositions directed against him and printed at Brussels were also a source of annoyance to him. Such was his anger at these that it helped not a little in bringing about the declaration of war against Spain. But this was principally done for the sake of making himself necessary. The year the enemy captured Corbie, although there was always a little fund of five hundred thousand crowns in the keeping of Mauroy, the provincial officer, the Cardinal was none the less greatly embarrassed. The worthy Bullion, head of the treasury, went to see him, and said: "What is wrong, Monseigneur?" (for by that title the Cardinal affected to be addressed). "Why do I find you out of spirits?" His tone was that of a somewhat reproachful old man, but determined.

"Eh! Have I not cause enough?" said the Cardinal. "The Spaniards have made their way in; they have captured towns; the Comte de Soissons has been driven back beyond the Oise, and we have no army left."

"Another must be raised, Monseigneur."

"And with what, pray?"

"With what? I shall give you the wherewithal to raise fifty thousand men and a million of gold to fall back upon."



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The Cardinal embraced him.

Bullion had always six millions in the keeping of Fieubet, the treasurer of the Epargne, for it was in him that his chief confidence reposed. Whence came the prodigious fortune of Lambert,<sup>2</sup> Fieubet's financial clerk, for he turned this money to profit. Anyone to whom he lent fifty thousand *livres*, when pressed for repayment by Lambert (as he used expressly to do), flung him a bag of a thousand francs to have a respite. But the Cardinal was hardly well informed if he did not know what was done with the money, or if there was not a reserve fund; but he wanted to thieve, so he let others thieve, and that is the truth.

At this period he went about Paris without guards, but he had ball-proof iron in his cloaks, and likewise in the front and back leatherwork of his coach, and always someone in the lackeys' place. He regularly took Marshal La Force with him, as being a favourite with the people. The King went to Chantilly, and despatched the Marshal de Châtillon to break down the bridges on the Oise. Montatère, a gentleman who was with de Liancourt, met the Marshal, and said to him: "And what are we to do, we on the other side of the river? It looks as if you were leaving us to be pillaged."

"You must send," replied the Marshal, "and ask for guards from M. Piccolomini. I shall give you letters: he is a friend of mine. We used them thus in Flanders, after the battle of Avein."

M. de Liancourt and M. d'Humières having learnt this, joined in with Montatère. The Marshal wrote. Piccolomini sent three guards, and wrote telling the Marshal that if it had been the Marshal de Brézé, he would not have had them. (Piccolomini was a lover of order: being lodged once in the house of a gentleman, he safeguarded everything, even to the fruit-trees, and had a page whipped for going in amongst them over the wall.) M. de Saint-Simon, knight of the order and the captain of Chantilly, eager to act the faithful servant, went and told the King that there was a guard at Montatère, that it was a very high place, and that from there one could discover when the King might happen to be ill-guarded, and come over to carry him off with five hundred horse, for, he declared, there were shallow passages on the river. The King fell into a fine state of fright! He began to storm against Montatère, and said he wished his head could be cut off in three days, and that 'twas he who had given this fine example to the others. Montatère kept himself out of sight, although it was really the Marshal de Châtillon



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who ought to have been the object of the storm. The King himself had given ground for the panic that reigned in the district, for he had had Chantilly emptied of its furnishings, though it has good moats and is on this side of the river. His fury lasted a couple of days, after which Sanguin, the chief butler, served the King with some pears he had had from Montatère. His Majesty found them excellent, and asked whence they came.

"Sire," said he, laughing, "if you knew that, you would perhaps not wish to eat any more. Eat on, eat on, and then I shall tell you." And afterwards he told him: "It was the man against whom you were raging so much yesterday who gave me them to serve to you."

He broke into laughter, and said he would like to have some cuttings of those trees. In the end M. d'Angoulême made Montatère's peace, on condition that he would not speak. And indeed the King said to him: "Montatère, I grant you pardon: but—no explanations!" And he turned his back on him.

He would have done better, or the Cardinal for him, to punish those who fled so basely from Paris. For at that time the Orléans road was thronged with the carriages of people who imagined that they were unsafe in Paris. Barentin de Charonne was one such. He should have been made an example, and condemned to a heavy fine, for he was a rich man and childless.

He cherished the project of making himself a duchy at Richelieu, and to this end desired to possess Isle-Bouchard, which belonged to M. de La Tremouille. He was anxious to make a tricky bargain, so he sent certain spies who said that the Cardinal would give such-and-such a sum for it. It was a greater figure than the land was worth, but the Duke believed it. Then the Cardinal asked whether he was willing to sell to him. The other answered that he was, and that he would give him his word. "And I give you my word that I shall buy," said the Cardinal. "But we must find out," he added, "how much it is valued at, for you would not like to put too high a price on it for me." "Ah! But I had been told you would give whatever was asked," replied the Duke. But, nevertheless, he had to resign himself. The forest alone was worth the hundred thousand crowns the Cardinal gave. (La Tremouille, indeed, has made even more foolish bargains than this. His brother-in-law, La Moussaye, has made from the forest of Quintin, which the Duke sold to him as part of the estate of

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Quintin, the full five hundred thousand francs which the whole property cost him. He has parted with a forest together with its land for less than the value of the timber.)

The Cardinal exchanged the domain of Chinon with the King; and, so that he might not have a fine house in the neighbourhood (and one that was bound to belong to a prince, for it was the property of Mademoiselle), he obliged M. d'Orléans, as the latter's guardian, to exchange Champigny against Bois-le-Vicomte, and to raze the castle to the ground. He was likewise anxious to raze the chapel which is there, containing the tombs of MM. de Montpensier. To this end he had represented to the Pope (for such chapels depend directly from the Pope) that its ruin was impending. Innocent the Tenth, at that time a Papal chancery officer of Cardinal Barberin, the legate in France, was instructed to proceed to an examination on the spot. He found that the chapel was a magnificent one and in excellent repair. His report was opposed to the Cardinal. And the latter did not dare to lay a mine under the chapel and declare it to be a flame from heaven. This is why, since then, Mademoiselle has desired to return to Champigny, and has returned thither.

Consider the weakness of this man! He might have made famous the most obscure corner in all France, but he thought a large building added to his father's house would magnify his glory, without reflecting that—apart from all these troubles with the King's domain and with Champigny—the place was neither beautiful nor healthy: for with all the advantages which he supplied there, one does not grow used to it. He made several obvious faults: the main part of the dwelling is too small and narrow, though his idea of preserving a part of his father's house (where one is shown the room in which the Cardinal was born), and this to make it known that his father had a house of hewn stone, roofed with slate, in a district where the peasants' houses are exactly the same. He has also had the affectation to leave standing, in the corner of his flower-garden, a fair-sized church, on account of its being the burying-place of his ancestors. The courtyard is very pleasant and richly adorned with statuary. Inside, the gilding and the pictures make up a wonderful decoration, but from the garden side the front of the house is ridiculous. Fountain-jets have been introduced in considerable numbers. The canals are of beautiful water, made by a little stream, and the moats are as full as they could be. The park and gardens are beautiful, but the wood

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is not, for oak-trees do not thrive so well in marshy soil as do those great alleys of poplars. He would have made something much more splendid at Isle-Bouchard.

Neither in the castle nor in the town could a cellar be made. Some have been dug at the end of the garden. The farm-yard court is beautiful, the town smiling, for it is a toy-like place; the church is very pleasing, the houses of the town are of uniform structure, and all of hewn stone. They have been built by persons in the treasury or the household or the payment of the Cardinal. He has not himself had the satisfaction of seeing Richelieu; he had too many concerns on his hands. In Paris he amused himself by retaining one room of the Hôtel de Rambouillet,<sup>8</sup> and this freak of fancy likewise spoils the main part of the house. In fact, both in town and country, he had a miserly way of building. It must also be said, as it is true, that at the beginning he did not have such a large project in view; everything was done by fits and starts. In order to have the necessary space, he was anxious to purchase the house where the sign of the "Three Maidens" hung, and at first he proceeded gently and by force of reason. But the citizen who owned it was foolish enough to say that it was a paternal heritage. In the end the Cardinal grew angry and, by a shameful act of revenge, had him placed under the tax imposed on the well-to-do. After which he had the house for the asking.

(He bequeathed the Palais-Cardinal, as his testament will show, to the Dauphin, for his lodging or that at least of the heir-presumptive to the crown. When the Court took up its abode there soon after the death of the late King, the words *Palais-Royal* were put up. It was very ridiculous to alter this inscription. In '47, Mme Aiguillon took her opportunity and made representation that a wrong was being done to her uncle, and a promise was given that the name of *Palais-Cardinal* should be restored. It was commonly said by the people that the fact was that the Queen had given it to Cardinal Mazarin.)

This same tax he also had applied to Barentin de Charonne, in respect of his house of Charonne, who had so often been his host. Doubtless he well deserved it, for he was very rich; and he had done a foolish thing to the Cardinal, for he made a great outcry about a candle-end that had been put against a wall and had blackened some wretched water-colour painting. You may be sure that this was not with the Cardinal's consent, for he was very orderly and never damaged anything. No house was ever seen better kept and better governed than his. Barentin was



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foolish enough to die of affliction over this, so ill-natured and self-seeking was he. To excuse the Cardinal, it was said that two or three small breaches of order like that which happened at Charonne, and the scant civility of these people, who did not yield him all their house, although it was not too big, dispensed him from exempting them from the tax; and it was said that he was afraid of an outcry against him for sparing Barentin when people of quite a moderate competence were taxed. None the less, that did not strike most people very favourably.

At Ruel, to speak at once of his edifices, nothing very remarkable will be seen either. But he took pleasure in being near to Saint-Germain.

Father Caussin, the Jesuit, who had succeeded Father Arnoux, was minded to make a cabal against the Cardinal, with La Fayette, a lady-in-waiting of the Queen's, with whom the King was in love, in his fashion. M. de Limoges, the young woman's uncle, came in with them likewise; Mme de Senecy, his favoured friend, was expelled, and La Fayette became a religious. Here is the manner wherein this was discovered:

M. d'Angoulême, then a widower (he is the bastard of Charles IX), had gone to beg the Cardinal to permit a certain lady named Ventadour, abbess of — in Lower Normandy, whom the Cardinal had deprived of her abbey on account of certain libels she had made against him, to enter some religious house in Paris, that she might not be left in the street. The Cardinal granted him this. On his way back, he was at the Jesuits' in the Rue Saint-Antoine, where Father Caussin told him that the King, touched with compassion for his people, had decided to dismiss Cardinal Richelieu, who was the greatest scoundrel among men, and that the King had fixed on him to make cardinal and to put in the other's place. Note what an excellent man he was taking! Off went M. d'Angoulême, wondering what was to be done. He decided to speak instantly to M. de Chavigny. The latter embraced him, and said: "You bring us hope of life! For six months now no one has known what was wrong with the King." And forthwith Chavigny dashed posthaste to Ruel.

Next day M. d'Angoulême betook himself thither, and both together they went to seek the King. The Cardinal, laughing, said: "Sire, here is this wretch, this traitor, this scoundrel: you must put M. d'Angoulême in his place!" And the King broke into laughter with them, but very half-heartedly, and said: "I've noticed for some time that poor Father Caussin



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has been growing feeble." The Comte d'Alais got the governance of Provence for this business.

Not long afterwards, when M. d'Angoulême was running a stag with the King in the forest of Vincennes, the King said to him: "Sirrah, do you see that keep there? 'Tis no fault of the Cardinal's that you were not thrown into it." "Odsbody, Sire," answered the other, "I must have merited that, for he wouldn't have advised you that otherwise!"

Father Caussin came by his death in a curious fashion. He dabbled in astrology, and discovered that he was bound to die on a certain day. When the day came, with no illness on him, he took to his bed and died. The Queen-Mother also had great faith in predictions and was infuriated when she was assured that the Cardinal would prosper and live long. She believed that those buzzing bluebottles hear what is said and will repeat it: when she saw one of them she would never say anything confidential.

The cabinet undoubtedly gave the Cardinal some trouble, and he spent a good deal on spies. The King was feeble and dared do nothing on his own account. On one occasion it was discovered that he had been bold enough to grant a bishopric, that of Le Mans, which had fallen vacant through the death of one Lavardin. The King had word of it before the Cardinal and said to one of his chaplains, La Ferté by name, that he gave it to him. La Ferté went off to see the Cardinal, and tremblingly said to him that the King had given him the bishopric of Le Mans without his having asked it of him. "Oh, indeed!" said the Cardinal, "the King has given you the bishopric of Le Mans. That is extremely probable!" The youth thought that it was going to be taken from him, and some small post given him in its stead. But the first time that the King saw the Cardinal, he said to him: "I have given the bishopric of Le Mans to La Ferté." And the Cardinal, noticing this, had enough respect for the King not to undo what he had already done.

The first capture made in Flanders was that of Hesdin. One attack was commanded by La Meilleraye, the other by Lambert. The latter had a certain engineer who had served the States and did things in order and as they should be done. But the former had no idea of patience, had numerous men killed, and made less progress than the other. He sent for this engineer to come. "How many days do you ask of me?" he asked him. "Neither less nor more than for the other attack, sir," he replied. "It needs so much time to pass the moat."

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The attack of Lambert had to be delayed, in order that La Meilleraie should have the honour of the capture, and be made Marshal of France in the breach.

It was here that La Meilleraie, in lack of money, proposed to the Cardinal to appoint four other superintendents of finance at two hundred thousand *livres* each. "My good sir," said the Cardinal, "if someone said to you: 'Look, you have a steward who is robbing you; but you are far too great a lord to be robbed by only one: you should take four more'—would you listen to him?" On another occasion he said to the Cardinal that he knew someone who would give eight hundred thousand *livres* for the civil lieutenancy. "Do not mention his name," answered the Cardinal. "He must be a thief."

Hesdin surrendered a week sooner than it should have done by reason of a cipher letter being intercepted, in which the besieged appealed for assistance. It was Rossignol who deciphered it, and made out an answer in the same code, in the name of the Cardinal-Infanta, saying that no help was possible and advising them to ask for terms. At La Rochelle also, Rossignol deciphered a letter which gave courage to the Cardinal and strengthened him in his design.

This Rossignol was a poor youth from Albi, who had a certain ability in deciphering. The Cardinal kept him as much to frighten people as for anything else. He amassed a fortune and is to-day master of the accounts at Poitiers. He practised devotion to the extent of bodily discipline. In 1653 he received fourteen thousand crowns for three years' pension. Cardinal Mazarin believed that he was useful to him for mental calculations, but neither he nor any human head could disentangle them except by chance. It is said that he never solved any of them save one. Otherwise, a poor sort of man. He recounted familiarly to Cardinal Richelieu the honours which had been paid to him at Albi: "Monseigneur," he said, "they did not dare approach me. They regarded me as a favourite. But for my part, I lived amongst them just as in the old days: they were quite amazed at my civility." The Cardinal shrugged his shoulders, and said to Desmarest when the other had gone: "Kindly get any information you can out of him." Whereupon Desmarest accosted him, and said: "Well, you have given Monseigneur a good deal to keep just now." "Heavens! Not at all!" said Rossignol. "I have not told him the half. But I have a mind to tell you the whole story." And thereupon he bragged away as much as anyone could wish. "But then,"

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he added, "I mustn't forget to tell you some of my neat sayings. There was a judge who was half-afraid to come near me. But I embraced the good man, and said to him with a laugh: 'Ah! remember the *Albergat*!'" It was a certain tavern where they had drunk together.

When the Duke of Lorraine defaulted in the treaty he had concluded with the King at Saint-Germain, the Cardinal hoped to console His Majesty with a bag of savings (for nothing consoled him so much as that), and, being suspicious that ten thousand pistoles received by the Duke were still in Paris, set the commissary Coiffier in search of them, and promised him six hundred as his share. Coiffier by some chance was acquainted with a Lorrainer who was on good terms with the Duke, and going to this man's house, he said: "You are going to be arrested on a certain charge." The Lorrainer confessed that he had this money. "Oh, well, give it me, and you will be left alone: I give you my word for that." The Lorrainer gave it. Coiffier took it to the Cardinal, and the Cardinal to the King. The promised six hundred pistoles were duly paid.

The Cardinal was a man who kept his word, as will be seen from the story I am about to tell. There was a certain engineer named de Meuves, who one day had rashly declared that "all one had to do was to buy two houses opposite each other in the Rue Saint-Honoré, and lay a mine under the street, and set the spark to it when the Cardinal was passing." Judge for yourself whether that is very feasible. Well, the Cardinal had wind of this, and heard also that the man had a secret for breaking iron with a certain liquid. This alarmed him, and he determined to get rid of this man.

De Meuves had access to the Arsenal, and the grand master thereof had hopes of gaining great advantages from this secret, in the surprising of towns where there are iron grills to give passage to some stream or other. It happened one evening that the man had promised someone to go and sleep at Saint-Cloud; it was late; and he had the idea of going and severing the chain of a boat with his concoction, and took his lackey with a lighted torch to be able to pass under the bridges. As it happened, that was the very night of the fire breaking out on the Pont-au-Change. A splendid excuse! De Meuves was accused of having set fire to this bridge, and intentionally.

The Cardinal appointed as chief of his commissioners in the matter (all councillors at the Châtelet, who are judges of incendiaries) M. des Cordes, a man whose life deserves to be



written, in order that it could be said, although this incorruptible judge would not have the say over the others: "He has been condemned by M. des Cordes." The Cardinal had a mind to possess the secret, so he sent the clerk of M. des Cordes, de Nieslé by name (from whom we learn these details), to inquire. De Nieslé brought him some of the stuff, for a quantity of it had been discovered at de Meuves' house when he was arrested. The Cardinal wanted to witness an experiment with it. The metal bands of a cupboard were rubbed with it, and after quarter of an hour the boards of the cupboard fell to the ground. Seeing which, the Cardinal was no longer obstinate in his desire to possess this secret, as he had been: "for," he said, "there would no longer be any security." Before this he had sent to ask de Meuves for it, but the latter answered that he would never give it unless he were promised his life. "I shall not promise him that," said the Cardinal. "For I should have to keep my word to him, and I want him to die." And he was duly hanged.

What a pleasing scruple! He did not want to break his word, and he sent an innocent to his death. A statesman, or rather a tyrant as he was, deems that a broken promise injures good fame, while few people will know that this man has been unjustly done to death.

A certain baron of Languedoc, whose name escapes me, a kinsman of M. de Cavoye, had once discovered a kind of hollow ball which was filled with gunpowder and fitted with a wick which lit itself when the cannon was fired, so bursting in the earth and doing almost as much damage as a laid mine. His late Majesty, Louis XIII, had a trial of this made at Versailles, where an earthwork of half-moon shape was specially constructed. Saint-Août, the lieutenant-general of artillery, with intentional malice, sent bad powder, of which the baron made complaint. The King was vexed. Saint-Août came and brought good powder. The effect was great, and the King presented the baron to the Cardinal at Ruel. The latter feigned delight, but, as this discovery took away a great profit on the artillery, by reducing the establishment to a quarter of the carriages, he managed things so that orders were given for this baron to retire. Yet nothing was more serviceable against earthworks.

Ambition drove the Cardinal to a desire to conciliate the rival religions, and he meditated this for a long while. He had already corrupted several ministers of religion in Languedoc, those who were married, with money, those who were not, with the promise of benefices. He had plans for the holding



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of a conference, with those whom he had won over as deputies: these, joining hands with their opponents, would engage the rest to do likewise. With this intention in mind, he turned his eye upon the Abbé de Saint-Cyran, a man of high repute and probity, to make him leader of the doctors who would dispute with the ministers. Saint-Cyran replied that he was greatly honoured in being adjudged worthy to be at the head of so many able men, but that his conscience obliged him to say that this was not the way of the Holy Spirit, but rather that of flesh and blood, and that heretics should be fittingly converted only by the good examples given them. This remonstrance was not very tasteful to the Cardinal, and was the true reason for the imprisonment of Saint-Cyran.

In Languedoc the Cardinal sent to make trial of one of the ministers of Montpellier, named Le Fauscher, a native of Geneva. He wanted to win him over on account of his reputation. He sent him ten thousand francs. The worthy man was exceedingly surprised. "What! Why am I sent this?" he asked the bearer. "My lord Cardinal," replied the man, "begs you to accept this sum as a gift from the King." But Le Fauscher would not touch it, which brought him into ill-favour with the Cardinal, and the unhappy minister was for a long time under interdict, until he had permission to preach in Paris.

I have heard that one of the circumstances that chiefly led to the reform of the monastic houses, and especially those of women, was the mad exploit of a certain Mme de Frontenac, a nun at Poissy, who, not content with carrying on love affairs, was inspired to dance a ballet with five other nuns and their six gallants. They went to Saint-Germain, where the King was, and it was thought at first that the ballet had come from Paris. But next morning the truth was discovered, and that same day the six nuns were sent into exile. Before that they had each their separate lodging and garden, and ate in private if they were so minded.

More than once the Cardinal has had as much luck as skill, for, after having driven the Comte de Soissons to extremity, he opposed him with a good chief, it is true, but with a very feeble army. Lamboy had no trouble in undoing the Marshal de Châtillon. In strict truth, was it not of at least equal import to the Cardinal that the grand master should have the glory of the capture of Aire, as to gain the victory over the Comte? It has been believed on this account that he had made certain of having him slain in the fight. It is only a story: that would have been

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revealed in time. Every one believes that the Comte, trying to raise his visor with the point of his pistol, killed himself: and if he had not killed himself where would His Eminence have been? The whole of Champagne, of which the Comte was governor, would have opened its gates to the victors. All the malcontents would have joined; the King himself would perhaps have been glad to rid himself of a minister who was costly to him and whom he feared; for the Cardinal was not like the present one (Mazarin): he had true friends, and certain creatures who would never have failed him.

When the news of the defeat of M. de Châtillon was brought to him, the Cardinal was thrown into despair for five whole hours, and only recovered when he was informed of the death of the Comte. In this fight, the Marquis de Praslin, son of the marshal, received a hundred blows after his death. It is believed that he had given his parole to the Comte and then broken it. He was a royal functionary, but wicked. For a long while he had practised impiety, and to re-establish his reputation in these matters he pretended to have seen a vision. But Cardinal Richelieu made mock of it.

After the Comte's death, M. de Bouillon made a peace on equal terms with the King. In completing the treaty the Cardinal said: "There is still one condition to add: that Mme de Bouillon shall believe that I am her most humble servant." After which, M. de Bouillon went foolishly to join with M. d'Orléans and Cinq-Mars. His father had repeatedly advised him to remain in his small bodyguard, and he entered on an intrigue when commanding in Piedmont. He was taken at the head of his army, and his wife was constrained to return Sedan to save his life. He did not show any great constancy when in prison. The Comte de Soissons had inserted in his arms the motto: *For the King, against the Cardinal*. M. de Bouillon put: *Friend of the King, foe of the Cardinal*. M. de Guise had a chair reversed with a cardinal's hat beneath, and the words: *Deposuit potentem de sede*. The Prince of Simmeren, of the palatine house, was at Sedan when the Comte withdrew thither. Having returned from his country when the battle of Sedan was fought, he naïvely wrote this letter to the Comte de Soissons: "The rumour runs here that you have won the battle but have been killed there. Let me know what there is in it, for I should be greatly pained by your death." The Comte de Roussi has told me that he has seen this letter.

The "vision" of de Praslin reminds me of a physician

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of the Faculty, named Patin. A learned man, he nevertheless claimed that, having made one of his patients on the point of death promise to come back and tell him whether there was a Purgatory, this man did appear to him one morning. But he said nothing at all, for those who return from the other world never speak.

The Cardinal was miserly. Not that he did not spend freely, but he loved wealth. When M. de Créqui was killed by a cannon explosion in Italy, he went to see his pictures, took all the best of them at the inventory price, and never paid a penny-piece of it. He did worse: for Gilliers, M. de Créqui's steward, having brought him three of his own by his orders, and having presented one to him which he begged him to accept, the Cardinal merely said: "I want all three." And he owes for them still.

For fair ladies he paid scarcely any better than he did for pictures. Marion de l'Orme went twice to him. (I have been told that once she went there in man's dress, being passed off as a courier. She tells this herself.) On the first visit, he received her in a suit of grey satin, with gold and silver broideries, booted and with plumes. She declares that his pointed beard and his hair above the ears made the most attractive effect imaginable. After these two visits he had her presented with one hundred pistoles, through des Bournais, his personal valet, who had been the procurer in the episode. She flung them away, and jeered at the Cardinal.

Several times he was seen wearing face-patches.

On one occasion, he had designs against Princess Marie, now the Queen of Poland. She had sent to ask audience of him. He stayed in his bed, she was introduced quite alone, and the captain of the guard made every one retire. "Monsieur," she said, "I have come to——" He interrupted her: "Madame, I promise you everything. I do not in the least want to know what it is. But, madame, how admirable you look! Never better! You must know that I have always had an especial desire to be of service to you." Saying which he took her hand. She drew it back and began on her story. But he started his talk again, and again sought to take her hand. She rose and left the room.

As for Mme d'Aiguillon and Mme de Chaulnes, we shall tell that later when we reach the *Historiette* of the former. The Cardinal loved women, but he was afraid of the King, who had a malicious tongue. La Rivière, who died as Bishop of Langres,



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used to say that the Cardinal was prone to beat his men, and that more than once he beat the chancellor Séguier and Bullion. Once when the latter financial officer refused to sign something which would have sufficed to furnish his own accusation in law, the Cardinal took the tongs from the fire and gripped his neck, saying: "You little skinflint, I'll choke you!" And the other answered: "Choke away, I'll not prevent you." He let him go in the end, and next day Bullion, persuaded by his friends, who remonstrated with him that he was a lost man, signed everything the Cardinal wished. He was rough to those about him, and always in bad humour. True, he restrained himself fairly easily. It is said that he sometimes struck blows at Cavoie, his captain of guards, and others, in a transport of rage. Mazarin, it is said, did the same to Noailles when he was his captain of guards.

The Cardinal's pleasantries were sometimes hearty enough, but with no great matter behind them. (M. de Chavigny had thoughts of naming the Hôtel de Saint-Paul the Hôtel de Bouteillier, and inscribing thus on the door. Cardinal Richelieu laughed at this, and said to him: "All the Swiss guards will want to go and drink there: they'll think it's the Hôtel *Bottles*.") During the siege of Arras, I happened to write an epistle in verse to little Quillet, the physician of the Marshal d'Estrées, who was then at Amiens with the Court, for that fine war of Parma. The packet was addressed to him care of Bautru, a friend of Quillet's. But by chance it was taken to Nogent, his brother, who wished to have the pleasure of opening it, for it had cost him half a crown and he is the meanest of mortals. Nogent took the trifle to the Cardinal to let him laugh over it. It furnished occasion for His Eminence's pleasantry, on account of there being lines which could be applied to M. de Bullion, who, like Quillet, was small, fat, rosy, and liked good living. He rallied Senectère, a courtier of Bullion, and when Senectère remonstrated that Quillet's name was on it, he said: "What matter, whether it is for M. de Bullion or for your friend's physician? It is for you to make answer." And he put the letter into his hands. Later he returned it to Quillet, telling him with a very vexed air, for he was afraid Bullion knew about it, that he strongly advised his friends never to write, to places where the Court might be, anything which could apply to more persons than one. If my father had known that, and afterwards some ill-fortune had betided his affairs, he would have wanted to make me believe that my poetry was the cause of it.



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At that time, too, the Cardinal laughingly said to Quillet, who comes from Chinon: "You see this little fellow here? He is a kinsman of Rabelais, and a doctor, like him."

"I have not the honour," said Quillet, "to be a kinsman of Rabelais."

"But you won't deny," went on the Cardinal, "that you belong to Rabelais' country?"

"No, I admit, Monseigneur, that I belong to his country," replied Quillet, "but the country of Rabelais has the honour to belong to your Eminence."

That was pretty bold speaking, but a certain M. Mulot, of Paris, whom he had made canon of the Sainte-Chapelle, spoke to him even more boldly. True, the Cardinal was under a great obligation to this man, for when he was relegated to Avignon, Mulot sold all that he had and brought him three or four thousand crowns, which he needed badly. But M. Mulot disliked nothing so much as to be called "Chaplain to His Eminence." Once the Cardinal, for the sake of diversion, for he often tickled himself to enjoy a laugh, pretended to have received a letter addressed: *To Monsieur Mulot, Chaplain to His Eminence*, and gave it him. He was vexed to fury, and said out loud that some fools must have done this.

"Oho!" said the Cardinal. "And what if it had been myself?"

"And if it were," said Mulot, "it would not have been the first fool's trick you've played!"

Another time he reproached him for having no belief in God, and having confessed it to him.

The Cardinal one day had some thorns placed under the saddle of his horse, and no sooner was poor Mulot in the saddle, than the horse felt the pricks, and began to rear with such violence that the good canon thought his neck would be broken. The Cardinal laughed like a madman. Mulot managed to dismount, and went over to him ablaze with anger. "You are a wicked man!" he cried.

"Hush! Hush!" said His Eminence to him. "I'll have you hanged: you're revealing my confession!"

This same Mulot had a nose that showed clearly that he was no wine-hater. In fact, he could not prevent himself from administering a sharp rebuke to all who had inferior liquor. Sometimes when he had dined with someone who had not given him good wine to drink, he signed to the servants and said to them: "Look here, aren't you wrong not to give your

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master a warning, for perhaps he doesn't know it, that he does himself a great wrong in not having good wine to offer his friends?"

The Cardinal had two little pages, one called Meniguet, and the other Saint—I've forgotten the name of the saint. They used to combine wonderfully in making puns extempore. The Cardinal found diversion in this, and one day, when M. de Lansac had just come in, His Eminence said: "Meniguet, give me a pun on M. de Lansac."

"Monseigneur, I shall require a pistole: I can't pun without that."

"What, one pistole?"

"Yes, Monseigneur, I shall need one. And if I don't pun prettily, I'll submit to a whipping."

So the Cardinal gave him one. The little page put it into his pouch, and said: "*Pistole Lansac!*"

The Cardinal was so pleased that he gave him ten. He was often seized with fits of melancholy so extreme that he would send for Bois-Robert and others with the power of being diverting, and say to them: "Come, cheer me up, if you know the secret of it." Then they would each play the fool awhile, and when he was relieved, he turned to his business again.

For Mme de Rambouillet the Cardinal had a great feeling of friendship. He discovered that M. de Lizieux, although having property otherwise, still enjoyed a small estate which had formerly been given him for life by this lady's father-in-law. He could not endure this, and in and out of season he wanted to tell him so. Whenever he saw Mme de Rambouillet, the first thing he used to say to her was, "Madame, has M. de Lizieux restored that land?" In the end Mme de Rambouillet had to go down on her knees to have his assurance that he would speak no more of it. M. de Lizieux had forgotten whence this land came to him, or rather, he had forgotten that he had it at all. There was never a man knew less of his own business than he.

It has been remarked that Cardinal Richelieu punished with great severity the sedition of the "bare-foots" in Normandy, because that province has formerly had sovereigns, because it ranks higher than another province, because it is neighbour to England, and because it has still, perhaps, a certain inclination to having a duke.

It has also been remarked that it was a great blunder to forbid the weighing of pistoles, for there was so much clipping that they did not weigh more than six *livres*, and this was ruinous

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to the King when he had to take gold out of France. In the end this opened the Cardinal's eyes. True, he took steps to check this disorder, for he prohibited them all of a sudden. Then it was necessary to strike at the clippers. Montauron delivered up a throng of them to the King, and had them condemned in the heaviest sums that he could. There were so many that not all the rope in the kingdom would have been enough for their hanging. A few private members of the council who had some light gold were the cause of this ridiculous edict forbidding the weighing of pistoles. This obliged the coining of *louis-d'or* pieces.

The Cardinal once delivered an oration to the Parliament in the presence of the King, and his speech, which was fairly long, made a considerable stir. The orator was the making of it, for in truth it was no great thing in itself. There was talk of having it printed. He asked Cardinal La Valette to assemble a few men of intelligence. This was at Bautru's. Among these were M. Godeau, M. Chapelain, M. Gombauld, M. Guyet, and M. Desmarest, whom Bautru included on his own authority. The oration was read in full, as the Cardinal desired. Well, they spent from ten o'clock in the morning till the evening only in marking the most gross errors. When he knew that they had been so long in their examination, he drew back and had no further thoughts of printing. Bautru advised that he should not be shown the marks that had been made, for there were too many and he would have been furious. (It was packed with faults of speech, as much so as his *Catechism* or the *Christian Instruction*. He saw things clearly, but did not lay them out well. In succinct speech he was admirable and neat.)

Afterwards, he was not so docile. He imagined that he wrote better prose than anybody else, but it was only of verses that he really took account. He wrote a catechism which he had printed, where he says at one place: "It is like someone undertaking to hear the *More* of Terence without a commentary." He must have been a careful student of Terence!

There are still two other books of his. The first is entitled *The Perfection of the Christian*. In the preface to this book he declares that it was written during the troubles at Corbie. That is ridiculous vanity. Whenever it may have been done (and it was not likely to have been then, for he had not the leisure and had plenty of other things on his mind), there was no need to say it. M. Desmarest, and M. de Chartres (Lescot), who had been his confessor, have slightly revised this work.



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The other is entitled: *A Treatise exhibiting the Easiest and most Assured Method to Convert those who are Separated from Holy Church*. M. de Chartres and the Abbé de Bourséis revised this one. (Many people have thought that this last work is from the pen of M. de Chartres, for its style conforms with his, so far as can be judged by a sample, the approbation which this prelate placed at the beginning of the book. The Cardinal had several persons to work on the material, afterwards making choice, and doing so passably well.) After these two, Mme d'Aiguillon begged M. Chapelain to recast an Invocation to the Holy Virgin. He did it. But she changed nothing in it, from scruples, or from veneration for her uncle.

One thing has greatly surprised me about this man—that he had never read the *Memoirs of Charles IX*. Here is a convincing proof thereof. Someone having mentioned to him the *Voluntary Servitude* of Estienne de La Boétie (this is one of the treatises in those *Memoirs*, and one which, in my opinion, is only a college exercise and has enjoyed an exaggerated fame), he was desirous of seeing this work. He sent one of his gentlemen all up and down the Rue Saint-Jacques asking for *Voluntary Servitude*. But all the booksellers said: “We do not know what that can be.” They did not remember at all that it was in the *Memoirs of Charles IX*. In the end, the son of Blaise, a well-known bookseller, remembered this, and told his father. So when the gentleman called again, he said to him: “Oh, sir, there is an amateur who has that book you were asking for; but it is unbound, and he is asking five pistoles for it.” “No matter,” said the gentleman. So the worthy man went out by the back door and came back with the bundles of pages which he had unstitched—and got his five pistoles.

As for the Academy (“Psaphon’s bird-cage,” as Saint-Germain agreeably called it), I have nothing to add to what M. Pelisson has said about it in his *History*. I shall only remark that the Cardinal was delighted when the resolution of some difficulty was referred to him. He was complimentary to the Academicians and begged them to send him such things often in the same way. But was not his avarice in this business ludicrous? If he had granted Vaugelas enough to live honourably, without his having other employment than on the Dictionary, this work would have been completed in his lifetime, and there would have been no need to appoint commissioners who revised each letter with him. These commissioners would have to be paid too. But did that cost him nothing? Was it from his own purse that



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he paid people? That would have been honourable and useful to France. He neglected also to provide a building for this luckless Academy of his.

He was a glutton for praise. I have been assured that in the author's epistle of a book dedicated to him, he crossed out the word *Hero* and substituted *Demigod*.

A certain La Peyre, a kind of madman, took it into his head to put in front of a book a great sun, in the middle of which the Cardinal was represented. From him there darted forth forty beaming rays, at the tips of which were the names of the forty Academicians. M. the Chancellor, as the best qualified, had a direct ray. I think that M. Servien, then secretary of state, had the other; Bautru next, and the others "in the *pro rata* of their qualities," to use the phrase of La Vieuville. He included Chérolles-Bautru, who did not form part of it, instead of the commissioner Habert. He was a native of the Auvergne, who composed ridiculous treatises on chronology.

I have already said that the Cardinal cared only for verses. One day when he was closeted with Desmarest, whom Bautru had introduced to his circle, he asked him: "Wherein, think you, do I take the greatest pleasure?" "In advancing the happiness of France," answered Desmarest. "Not at all," answered the Cardinal. "It is in making verses." He had an insensate jealousy against *The Cid*, because his pieces had not succeeded too well. He wrote only tirades instead of proper plays. But when he was working he granted audience to nobody. Moreover, he would brook no revision. On one occasion L'Estoile, less complaisant than the others, told him as gently as possible that a certain line wanted amending. All that was wrong with it was that it had three syllables too many. "Come, come, M. de L'Estoile," he said to him, as if it had been a question of an edict, "we shall have it passed all right."

He once drafted out a play with all the proper reflections and gave it to Bois-Robert in presence of Mme d'Aiguillon. She followed him out when he went, to tell him to find means to prevent its appearing, for it was the most ludicrous thing imaginable. Bois-Robert, a few days later, made some indirect mention in this regard, and the Cardinal, noticing this, said: "Bring a chair for him, he wants to preach." Afterwards M. Chapelain made certain comments on this draft at the Cardinal's request. They were as softly worded as possible. His Eminence tore up the piece, then had the scraps pasted together again (all

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this in bed, at night), and at last reconciled himself to saying no more about it.

His taste was rather defective. He was known to have more than three performances given of a ridiculous prose play of La Serre, *Thomas More*. In one place of this Anne Boleyn is made to say to King Henry VIII, who offered her his promise of marriage:

*Sire, of these promises maidens take no count.*

And in another, moralising over the fragility of human things, she says to the King that the throne of monarchs is but a thing of flaws; to which the King replies:

*Ay, flaws that mark the glitt'ring diamond.*

Usually he would treat men of letters with great civility. He was never willing to remain covered because Gombauld wanted to be bareheaded: putting his hat on the table, he said: "We shall be a nuisance to each other." None the less, note the inconsistency: he sat down, and left him standing there to read a whole comedy through, without considering that the candle on the table (for it was night) was lower than the reader. That is a case of obliging and disobliging someone at the same time. But he has been praised for his ability to oblige graciously when he had a mind to.

According to La Mesnardière, he cherished a plan for the foundation at Paris of a great college with a hundred thousand *livres* income, to which he claimed that he would attract the greatest men of the age. There he would have had a home for the Academy, which would have been the directing body of the college. At Narbonne, La Mesnardière tells, shortly before his death, he summoned him seven or eight times to discuss the project with him. And so strongly did he hold to this, in spite of his illness and all the affairs he then had weighing on his shoulders, that his thoughts were often dwelling on it. Already, adds La Mesnardière, he had purchased some college. He left quite a handsome library, but the avarice of Mme d'Aiguillon, and the scant care which he took of it, allowed it to deteriorate considerably. The late Fourrille, when the King went to lodge at the palace, sought to have the key of this at all costs. Afterwards there were found seven or eight thousand *livres* worth of books missing. That donkey La Serre lodges there now, and has made there Lord knows what sort of a den.

The Cardinal used to dictate at night when he woke up. For

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this he was provided with a poor youth from Nogent-le-Rotrou, named Chéret. This lad pleased the Cardinal, because he could keep a secret and was industrious. It happened some years afterwards that a certain man was placed in the Bastille, and when Laffemas was sent to question him he discovered amongst his papers four letters from Chéret, in one of which he said to this prisoner: "I cannot go and find you, for we are living here in the strangest slavery possible, and we have to deal with the greatest tyrant that ever was."

Laffemas brought these letters to the Cardinal, who immediately summoned Chéret.

"Chéret," he said, "what were your possessions when you entered my service?"

"Possessions? None at all, Monseigneur."

"Write that down. What have you now?"

"Oh, Monseigneur," said the poor lad, greatly astonished, "I must think a moment about that."

"Well," said the Cardinal, after a little pause, "have you thought yet?"

"Yes, Monseigneur. I have so much in this, and such-and-such in that," and so on.

"Write that down."

When it was written, the Cardinal said: "Is that all?"

"Yes, Monseigneur."

"But you're forgetting," added the Cardinal; "there is an item of fifty thousand *livres*."

"Monseigneur, I have not had that money."

"I shall see that you have it. It was I who procured you that little affair."

Added up, he found himself with one hundred and twenty thousand crowns of property.

Then the Cardinal showed him these letters of his.

"Look, isn't that your writing? Read it. Come, you're a rogue. Don't let me ever set eyes on you again."

But Mme d'Aiguillon and the grand-master had him taken back by the Cardinal. Perhaps he knew things which they feared he might disclose. Not but what the Cardinal was terribly feared. For my part, I think that His Eminence, on this occasion, showed clemency enough. This Chéret is master of accounts. He had placed one of his brothers with the grand-master, and he, I think, did something also.

It is time to say something of M. le Grand. The Cardinal, who had not been fortunate with La Fayette, and saw clearly that



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the King needed some amusement, cast his eyes in the direction of Cinq-Mars, second son of the late Marshal d'Effiat. He had noticed that the King had already a certain partiality for this young man, who was handsome and well-built, and he thought that Cinq-Mars, being the son of a man who was a creature of his, would be more submissive to his will than another. For a year and a half Cinq-Mars evaded the business; he loved his own pleasures and knew quite well all about the King. But in the end his fate drew him in. Never did the King love anyone so warmly: he called him "dear friend." At the siege of Arras, when Cinq-Mars was there with the Marshal de l'Hospital leading the convoy, he had to write to the King twice a day. Indeed, his worthy Majesty once burst into tears when he was late in letting him have news of himself. The Cardinal wanted him to report everything, even to trifles. But he was only willing to tell things which concerned the Cardinal. And their differences began to break out when M. le Grand laid claim to enter the council.

It was apparently Fontrailles (a man of good birth from Languedoc, hunched both behind and in front, extremely ugly in features, but not foolish-looking, very small and stout) who chiefly incited Cinq-Mars against His Eminence, for he was himself angered with the Cardinal. And for this reason: that one day Fontrailles, Ruvigny and others were at Ruel in the Cardinal's antechamber, when it was announced that some ambassador or other was approaching. The Cardinal came out into the antechamber, and, finding Fontrailles there, said to him, in rough mockery: "Stand back, M. de Fontrailles, don't show yourself too prominently: this ambassador has no taste for monsters."

Fontrailles ground his teeth, and said inwardly: "Ah, you've just put a knife into my heart: but I shall plant mine in yours in my turn, or there'll be a reason why not!"

Afterwards the Cardinal bade him come in, and joked with him to cover over what he had said. But the other never forgave it, and it was that word which perhaps founded the great conspiracy aimed at the Cardinal's ruin.

Before telling of the rest, we must mention Catalonia and the Roussillon, as it was at Perpignan that the catastrophe befell. In the beginning the Cardinal made no great matter of Catalonia, for I think he had never read the *Memoirs of the League*, any more than those of Charles IX, and he did not know that it was across the Pyrenees, and not the Alps, that the



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Spaniards would have to be driven from Italy and from the Low Countries. Perhaps he knew, but he wanted to make the war last longer. However this may be, La Motte-Houdancourt sent him by the hands of La Vallée, the King's man in the Catalanian army, statements in which he showed clearly that he had important understandings with Aragon and Valencia: the Cardinal, touching this envoy's hand, said to him: "You may assure M. de La Motte that in a short time I shall lead the King in person into Spain." And I think that, the King being weary of the war, would have been there in good earnest this time. To this end he had the King make the journey to Perpignan. During this siege, the richest men of Saragossa withdrew into Castille and elsewhere. The Cardinal's plan was to bring the King to Barcelona with an army of forty thousand men, to send one of his best generals with some troops into Portugal, and at the same time to have siege laid to Fuenterrabia; this last being taken (for apparently the King of Spain would not have been able to hold this stake), the army would have passed along the Pyrenees to unite with that of the King later. There was only Pampeluna in the whole of Navarre to be besieged. The King had relish enough for this enterprise, and had ordered La Vallée to make ready the road of Our Lady of Montserrat. In fact, eight thousand *livres* were given out for the purpose, but the work was accomplished for something over a hundred thousand francs, for the peasants, knowing that it was for the King of France, refused to take money. Collioure was taken before Perpignan, but this was by the greatest luck in the world. The castle, which is on the rock, need fear neither cannon nor mine. But Marshal de La Meilleraye had a mine laid, with neither rhyme nor reason to it, and this filled up the only well that they possessed. So they had to yield not to die of thirst.

On the way into Roussillon, the Cardinal learned at Tarascon that Machault, the master of petitions, had very lightly caused several grain merchants to be hanged at Narbonne. He wanted to know the details of this affair. He was told that there was in the town a certain advocate of Paris of the name of Langlois (he was called "Swordsmith Langlois," because his father was of that calling, in order to distinguish from others of the same name). This advocate had been King's procurator in the district of Machault. Langlois attended, and, in telling his story of the matter, always used the word *Monsieur*. Every one present kept saying to him under their breath: "Say *Monseigneur*. Say *Monseigneur*." But he went on always saying *Monsieur*.

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The Cardinal laughed hugely at the zeal of all these flatterers, and listened to Langlois with the greatest attention. When he came out, the advocate said: "Well, at the Palace we only speak of *Monsieur*. I am a Palace man, and I don't know any other language."

To return to M. le Grand. When Admiral de Brézé had arrived (this was about Advent in 1641), the Cardinal, anxious to leave for Perpignan at the end of January, told him that he must prepare to arm the vessels at Brest, and then pass the strait to go and lie before Barcelona, in order to prevent help going to Perpignan. A few days later, Brézé entered the King's apartment. You may imagine that the doorkeeper did not let him knock twice! The King and M. le Grand were talking at the bedside. Brézé, without being seen, heard M. le Grand talking violence against the Cardinal. He withdrew, and turned it over in his mind. He was not yet twenty-two, and was afraid of not being believed. He resolved to follow the King at the hunt as often as he could, and if he found M. le Grand by himself, he would force him to take sword in hand. Once he found a favourable moment, but seeing a dog approaching he thought there would be people following. The next day, the Cardinal ordered him to set off on the following day. He was two days in hiding, having work done on his equipage. His Eminence knew of this, sent for him, and rebuked him severely. So at last the young man, not knowing what else could be done now, sought out M. de Noyers, and told him what he had heard and what he proposed to do. M. de Noyers told him that he must not yet set off on the morrow. The Cardinal, informed of the whole story, summoned him, thanked him for his zeal, and sent him off, after telling him that he would arrange the matter himself.

During the journey the bitterness increased. The Cardinal was anxious that M. le Grand should be sent away. The King, just because the Cardinal wished it, refused—not that he still cared for M. le Grand, as you will shortly see. His Eminence retired to Narbonne, on the pretext of his illness, leaving Fabert (a creature of Cardinal La Valette), captain of the guards, but one towards whom the King showed some favour and to whom the King had even said one day that he would like to use him to get rid of the Cardinal. He had been chosen as a man of spirit and sense. M. de Thou one day sounded Fabert to make him take the side of M. le Grand. Fabert gave him to understand that he knew a great many things and begged him to say nothing

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that he was obliged to expose. "But," said the other, "you have no recompense. You have bought your company in the guard."

"And you?" answered Fabert. "Have you no shame at being the follower, as it were, of a youth who has only just ceased to be a page? You are in a much worse path than you imagine."

Well, this is how it was discovered that the King no longer cared for M. le Grand. One day, in the King's presence, it chanced that the talk ran on fortifications and sieges. For a long time M. le Grand argued against Fabert, who knew rather more about it than he. The late King then said to him: "M. le Grand, you are wrong, you who have never seen anything, to want to prevail over a man of experience." And immediately he went on to make a number of remarks to M. le Grand on his presumption, and then sat down.

In a fury, M. le Grand went and said to him foolishly: "Your Majesty might well have dispensed with saying to me all that has been said."

Then the King was completely carried away. M. le Grand went out, saying under his breath to Fabert as he went: "My thanks to you, Monsieur Fabert," as if accusing him for all that had happened. The King wanted to know what it was, but Fabert would not tell him. "He threatened you perhaps?" said the King.

"Sire," said Fabert, "threats are never made in your presence: and moreover it would not be suffered."

"You must tell all, Monsieur Fabert" (and these are the King's own words), "for six months the man has turned my stomach." And he went on: "But to make things appear just the opposite, and so that people would think that he still went on entertaining me after every one had retired, he used to stay on for an hour and a half in the wardrobe-room, reading Ariosto. The two chief servants of the wardrobe were at his beck and call. There's no man more sunk in vice, and none so little complaisant. He's the most ungrateful creature in the world. He has made me wait sometimes for whole hours on end in my coach, while he was debauching himself. A kingdom would not be enough for his extravagance. At this very moment I'm speaking to you, he has anything up to three hundred pairs of boots!"

(The late King, when making preserves, said: "The soul of Cinq-Mars was as black as this pot's bottom!")

The truth is that M. le Grand was weary of the ridiculous life that the King led, and even more weary, perhaps, of his



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caresses. Fabert gave information on all this to the Cardinal. M. de Chavigny, whom he sent to seek Fabert, could not believe what he heard. That encouraged the Cardinal, who, seeing that after this M. le Grand still had a fair face to show, guessed that there was some great cabal supporting him; it was this Spanish treaty.

Before setting down my conjectures on the means whereby he came by it, I shall tell what the resolution of the Cardinal was. A little before his Narbonne retirement, on pretext of illness, the Cardinal dictated a declaration, the materials of which have been burnt. He spoke of withdrawing into Provence, on account of the Comte d'Alais, and hoped that his friends would come to join him there. And in fact he did go off, after having had himself told by the physicians that the sea air was so harmful to his condition that he would never be cured unless he went still further away. And instead of going by land, for greater safety, he embarked on the lake to go to Tarascon, saying that the rolling of the litter made him ill. When he was about to cross the Rhone, the story goes that a courier, who had not found him at Narbonne, arrived with a despatch from Marshal de Brézé, Viceroy of Catalonia, who, in four lines, informed him that a vessel had been wrecked on the coast and that there had been found on it the treaty of M. le Grand, or rather the treaty of M. d'Orléans with Spain, and that he was forwarding it.

That is the story that was sent around. But it is not the truth, as we shall tell later. Also, there is hardly any likelihood in what was said there, and those who believed it are folk of easy faith. The Cardinal (according to Charpentier, his chief secretary, who is capable of being deceived like anyone else, and who has told the story of the ship) was extremely surprised, and bade every one withdraw, Charpentier excepted. "Let me have a soup brought," he said, "I'm all put out." Charpentier went to take this at the door of the room, which was then bolted tight. And then the Cardinal, raising his hands to heaven, said: "O Lord God, Thou must take good care of this kingdom and of my person! Read that" (he added, to Charpentier) "and make copies of it." Immediately he sent a special messenger to M. de Chavigny, with orders to come and join him, wherever he might be. Chavigny found him at Tarascon, for he thought it advisable to cross the Rhone. Entrusted with a copy of the treaty, Chavigny went to the King. The Cardinal had given him careful instructions.

"The King will tell you it is a forgery, but propose to him to arrest M. le Grand, and that if it turns out to be false, it will



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be an easy matter to release him, but that if once the enemy enters Champagne, it will not be so easy to remedy that."

The King did not fail. He burst into a horrible fury against M. de Noyers and M. de Chavigny, and said that it was some malice of the Cardinal's, who wanted to ruin M. le Grand. They had great difficulty in bringing him to reason, but in the end he had M. le Grand arrested, and then went to Tarascon to have full light thrown on the matter with the Cardinal.

Well, when Fontrailles saw that the King was closeted so long with M. de Noyers and M. de Chavigny without M. le Grand being summoned, he said to him: "Monsieur, it is time that we retired." But M. le Grand was unwilling. "Well, for yourself," went on Fontrailles, "you'll still have a fine enough figure when you have your head taken off above the shoulders. But really I'm too small for that!" So he escaped in a Capuchin's habit, as he had done when he went to make the treaty in Spain.

The truth concerning the means taken to get the treaty is not yet divulged. Fabert has said that the late King had known it, as did M. de Noyers and M. de Chavigny, and that there were no others but the Queen, M. d'Orléans, Mazarin and he who knew it, but that he will take good care not to tell. One day someone asked M. le Prince by what device this treaty had been discovered, to which he made a whispered reply. Voiture, who saw this happen, said to M. de Chavigny: "You make a great fuss over this precious secret, but M. le Prince has told it to so-and-so." "M. le Prince does not know it," said Chavigny; and if he were to know it, he would not dare tell." From which Voiture conjectured that it came from the Queen, and in proof thereof it was remarked that after much talk of taking her children away from her, there was suddenly no more said of this. To this it will be said that, if things had been so, Mme de Lansac, who held the place of Mme de Senecey, and was at the same time governess of the Dauphin, would not have drawn the Queen's curtain so violently, to insult her, in informing her in a bitter tone that M. le Grand was arrested. But this is of no import, for, in order to give a wrong scent, all that was apparently left to Mme de Lansac, and perhaps she was made to do so on purpose. Time will have more to tell us about it all.

At Lyons, the chancellor was insistent to M. le Grand that the King loved him too dearly to let him be lost, that a little time in prison would be the worst that could come of it, that His Majesty would have consideration for his youth; so insistent, indeed, that poor M. le Grand had faith in him and made full

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confession. Afterwards, from fear of the torture held before him, which they would have applied to him to the point of death, he held firm.

As for M. de Thou, he had not been in accord with the Spanish arrangement, but he had always been a fomentor of troubles. The trace of all his intrigues was found. He was the most restless of men: M. le Grand used to dub him, "His Restlessness M. de Thou." When he went out, he was unable to determine, sometimes for a whole hour, where he would go. From some ridiculous affectation of generosity, as soon as any person was fallen into disgrace, he desired his acquaintance, and went to offer him his services.

M. le Grand was full of spirit. He was in no way shattered by his great reverse of fortune: on the contrary, he wrote with great good sense, and even with elegance, to his mother, Mme d'Effiat. He died with manly courage, but M. de Thou played the pious hypocrite. He asked continually if there were no trace of vanity in his humility. He wrote inscriptions for placing on gifts which he made. In the end he made a prodigious to-do, and it seemed, with his long talking, that he wanted to familiarise himself with death. I consider that he died like a pedant, he who had always lived as a cavalier, for his cassock counted for naught. The great lords and ladies had spoilt him, and also the belief of his descent from the counts of Toul. If you looked into this, you would find that the family came of humble stock: from a peasant of Athis, I have heard.

The Cardinal, who had towed M. de Thou behind him on the Rhone, had great difficulty in reaching the Loire. (He went to the baths at Bourbon-Lancy, but this remedy did him little good. Pliny tells how two Roman consuls died of furunculosis which they caught, like the Cardinal, in the Narbonne region of Gaul. The Cardinal was subject to hæmorrhoids, and Juif had once knowingly cut him with a clumsy hand.) In order not to incommode him, the walls of houses where he lodged were broken down, and if it were at a height, a sloping way was made from the courtyard, and he entered by a window from which the casement had been removed. Twenty-four men bore him in relays. Once he had reached the Loire, there was only the trouble of carrying him from the barge to his dwelling. Mme d'Aiguillon followed him in a separate barge; many other people did likewise, and it was like a small fleet. He was escorted by two squadrons of cavalry, one on each bank of the river. Care was taken to make ways for the uniting of waters that were low;

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and for the canal of Briare, which was almost dried up, the locks there were opened. This fine employment was given to M. d'Enghien.

When he returned to Paris, he had the capture of Sedan added to *Europa*, calling it in the piece "The Cave of Monsters." This vision had come to him in the design he had for destroying the monarchy of Spain. It was, as it were, a kind of manifesto. M. Desmarest wrote the verses for it, and arranged the matter.

The Cardinal, had he been willing to use his vast power beneficently, might have been a man whose memory would have been blessed for ever. It is true that the cabinet gave him much trouble. His death was a great loss, for he was always especially partial to Paris; and since he had advanced so far it was to be desired that he should live long enough to lay low the house of Austria. The grandeur of his own family was his greatest folly.

To show how much he was troubled by the cabinet, it is enough to tell how Tréville caused him some unpleasant hours. He had learned, perhaps by the testimony of M. le Grand, that the King, pointing to Tréville, had said: "Monsieur le Grand, here is a man who will rid me of the Cardinal whenever I choose." Tréville was in command of the mounted musketeers whom the King had established so as to be accompanied by them everywhere, at the chase and elsewhere, and he himself selected the soldiers for this corps. Sons of M. d'Uzès have been seen in its ranks. By this means one could pay one's respects.

Tréville is a native of Béarn, a soldier of fortune. The Cardinal had won over his cook, and it is said that this woman had a pension of four hundred *livres*. The Cardinal refused to leave in the King's entourage a man in whom His Majesty had so much confidence, and M. de Chavigny went, on the Cardinal's behalf, to urge the King to dismiss him. In all humility the King answered: "But, Monsieur de Chavigny, it must be remembered that my reputation is impaired, that Tréville has served me well, that he bears signs of it, that he is faithful."

"But, Sire," said M. de Chavigny, "you must also consider that the Cardinal has served you well, that he is faithful, that he is necessary to your State, and that you must not put Tréville in the balance against him."

"What!" said the Cardinal, when M. de Chavigny brought back this report to him. "You did not press the King more than that? Did you not tell him that he *must*? Your head is turned, M. de Chavigny, your head is turned!"

Chavigny later vowed to him that he had said to the King:



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“Sire, it is essential that you should do it.” The Cardinal knew well with whom he was dealing. The King dreaded the burden, and what is more, was afraid lest the Cardinal, who held almost every place, should revenge himself on him. In the end, Tréville had to be dismissed.

His Eminence believed that he would recover from his sickness: all the declarations against M. d’Orléans bear the mark of that. He hated him and despised him, and desired to have him declared incapable of wearing the crown, so that, if the King should happen to die (and he could not live long), this prince should have no hand in the government.

There are some who have believed that the Cardinal had designed to govern the Queen through Cardinal Mazarin, and that he had had him made Cardinal to this very end. True, M. de Chavigny was of use in preventing M. de Noyers from being so. It has been thought that there was already an understanding between the Queen and Cardinal Richelieu, and that it dated from the time when he had the Spanish treaty from her. I have heard it said that the first time Cardinal Richelieu presented Mazarin to the Queen (it was after the treaty of Cazal), he said to her: “Madame, you will like him well: he resembles Buckingham.” I know not whether that counted for anything, but it is thought that the Queen had an inclination towards him at a distance, and that Cardinal Richelieu had noticed as much, or that this resemblance gave him room to hope for such an inclination.

When *Europa* was played, he was not present. He had witnessed several rehearsals with the costumes which he had made at his own expense; his arm did not allow him to attend. He said to his niece, on her return, pointing to Cardinal Mazarin: “Whilst you were at the play, my niece, I was instructing a minister of state.” And it is said that he named him to the late King, and that on another occasion he said: “I know of only one man who can take my place, and yet he is a foreigner.” Others think that there is overmuch subtlety in saying what I have said concerning the project of governing the Queen through Cardinal Mazarin, and think that his intention was nothing but that of introducing into affairs a man who, being both a foreigner and his creature, would attach himself, from gratitude or from his need for support, to Richelieu’s heirs and entourage; but it is not the first time that he made a mistake. He took M. de Chavigny for the greatest wit, and Morand, the magistrate to the council, for the greatest of lawyers.



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The King only went to see the Cardinal a short time before he died, and having found his condition bad, he left in high spirits. The Cardinal had his cautery closed up, because his arm was becoming too thin: that may well have killed him; he lived scarcely any time after that. The *curé* of Saint-Eustache came to attend him. It is said that he told him that he had no enemies but those of the State, and that Mme d'Aiguillon came in, very much heated, and said to him: "You will not die, Monsieur, you will not die! A holy maiden, a worthy Carmelite, has had it revealed to her!"

"Come, come, niece!" he answered. "One should laugh at such talk. One must believe only in the Gospel."

It has been said that he died in great constancy. Bois-Robert says that for the last two years of his life the Cardinal had become exceedingly scrupulous, and would not suffer the slightest licence in speech. He adds that the *curé* of Saint-Eustache, with whom he had talked on the matter, had in no way told him that the Cardinal met death with the constancy that was so much celebrated. My lord of Chartres (Lescot) has said several times that he knew not the least sin in His Eminence the Cardinal. Upon my word! A man who would believe that must be fit to believe anything!

<sup>1</sup> Bitter = *aigres*.

<sup>2</sup> This Lambert died young and wore himself out so cruelly in amassing wealth that he never enjoyed a penny of it. He left a hundred thousand *livres* of income to his brother.

<sup>3</sup> The Hôtel de Rambouillet of the present day belonged to M. de Pisani. [T.]

<sup>4</sup> = *Pistole en sac* (pistole in pouch!).

# MADEMOISELLE DE GOURNAY



HIS old maid from Picardy came of good family. I know not how she had chanced to come upon Montaigne, but she boasted herself his adopted daughter. She knew verses, and made them, but bad ones. Malherbe having made mock of some of her works, she proceeded in revenge to expose the translation which he had made of one of the books of Livy which had been found at the time, and where he had translated *Fecere ver sacrum* as they made the execution of the sacred spring. She had had printed a book entitled *The Shadow*; or, *The Gifts of the Lady of Gournay*. In this book there was a chapter of diminutives, such as *pot*, *potkin*, *potkinlet*. She was asked one day by Boisrobert what was the reason for this book's title, but she could not tell him. "I must look in my German cabinet," she said. But after much searching in all the drawers, she found nothing.

The Comte de Moret, the Chevalier de Bueil and Yvrande played her many a trick in their time. On one occasion, in mockery of some verses where she had put "Tit" for "Titus"; they sent her these :

*Tit, fils de Vesp., roi du Rom. héritage,  
Des peuples inchrétiens qui cassèrent Carthage,  
Prodiguait rarement son amoureux empoix ;  
Mais il aimait si fort les filles de science,  
Que la Gournay eût eu son auguste semence,  
Il l'eût même Titée au plus fort de ses mois.*

It is said that Desmarest was their maker.

They concocted others for her. In one place the word *foutaison* occurred. "Jamyn !" she exclaimed snorting, as her way was, "that word is not in good use, Lord help us ! But I should pass it all the same : 'tis true it is rather ugly."

These plagues passed off on her a letter purporting to come

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from King James of England, wherein he asked her for her biography and portrait. She spent six weeks in composing her life. Then she had a daub made of herself, and sent off the whole to England, where nobody knew what it all meant. They tried to get her to believe that she had said that fornication was no crime ; and one day, being asked whether pederasty were not a crime, she answered : " God forbid that I should condemn what Socrates practised ! " In her sense, pederasty is commendable. But for a maiden lady that is naughty enough !

Saint-Amant ill-treated her shockingly ; for it is of her and Maillet that he writes in his *Le Poète Crotté*. Bois-Robert brought her to Cardinal Richelieu, who made her a complimentary speech composed entirely of ancient words which he had taken from her *Shadow*. She saw quite well that the Cardinal was merry. " You laugh at the poor old woman," she said to him. " Laugh away, great genius that you are : for your diversion everybody must give something." The Cardinal was taken aback by the old maid's presence of mind, and asked her pardon, saying to Bois-Robert : " We must do something for Mlle de Gournay. I grant her two hundred crowns pension." " But there are her servants," said Bois-Robert. " And who are they?" the Cardinal went on. " Mlle Jamyn," answered Bois-Robert, " the bastard daughter of Amadis Jamyn, the page of Ronsard." " I grant her fifty *livres* a year," said the Cardinal. " And there is likewise Mme Miaou," added Bois-Robert, " her cat." " Twenty *livres* pension for her," replied His Eminence, " on condition that she has some clothes." " But, Your Eminence," said Bois-Robert, " she has had kittens." And the Cardinal added one pistole more for the kittens.

She was very fond of Bois-Robert and always called him " my good abbé." And she also feared him, on account of the tales he told. He used to say that she had a set of false teeth made of seals' teeth. This she took out when eating, but replaced it so as to speak more easily, and did so very neatly ; at table, when others were talking, she used to take out her teeth and made haste to put away her portion, and then put them in place again to have her say.

She was a person of good birth, and had seen something of fashionable life. She was generous and had some strength of character. However small an obligation, she never forgot it. On her death she left by will her copy of Ronsard to l'Estoile, as if she deemed him alone worthy to read it. To Gombauld she left a map of ancient Greece, worth quite twopence.

## MADemoiselle DE Gournay

[*Note*.—The following story, closely connected with the *Historiette* of Mlle de Gournay, is extracted from that of Honorat de Bueil, Marquis de Racan (1589-1670), the pastoral poet, and friend of Malherbe.]

Never did the force of genius appear so clearly in an author as it did in Racan, for, apart from his verses, it seems that he has no common sense. He has the face of a farmer, he stammers, and he has never been able to pronounce his own name, for, by ill-fortune, *r* and *c* are the two letters which he pronounces the worst. More than once he has been forced to write his name to make it understood. For the rest, a good fellow, and without fineness, being made as I have just told you.

The Chevalier de Bueil and Yvrande, knowing that Racan intended to go about three o'clock to thank Mlle de Gournay, who had given him her book, had a mind to play him a trick, and the poor maiden lady likewise. (She, by the way, never called him anything but "Malherbe's monkey." She gave Malherbe a copy, too, although she had a deadly hatred for him.) So off he went there at one o'clock. He knocked. Jamyn went to announce to Mlle de Gournay that a gentleman was asking for her. She was writing a poem, but she rose, saying: "A beautiful thought, but it will come back: but this gentleman perhaps would not come back." He declared that he was Racan, and she, knowing him only by repute, believed him. She was most civil to him in her own way, and thanked him especially because, being young and handsome, he had not disdained to come and visit a poor old woman. The Chevalier, who had wit, told her a number of stories. She was delighted to find his humour so agreeable, and, noticing that her cat was miaouing, said to Jamyn: "Make pretty Puss keep quiet, to hear M. de Racan."

No sooner had this visitor gone, than Yvrande arrived. He found the door ajar, and slipped in, saying: "I enter with great freedom, mademoiselle, but the illustrious Mlle de Gournay should not be treated in common fashion."

"A pleasing compliment!" cried the old maid. "Jamyn! My tablets: I must note it down!"

"I come to thank you, mademoiselle, for the honour you have done me by the gift of your book."

"Ah, sir," she answered, "I have not made you the gift: but I ought to have done so. Jamyn! A copy of my *Ombre* for this gentleman."



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"But I have one, mademoiselle. And to prove it, there is such-and-such in chapter so-and-so."

And then, he told her that in return he had brought her some verses of his own. She took them and read.

"Here is something delightful, Jamyn," she said. "Jamyn can understand, sir: she is the natural daughter of Amadis Jamyn, Ronsard's page. This is charming. Here you *malherbize*: here you *colombize*. That is charming. But may I not know your name?"

"Mademoiselle, my name is Racan."

"Sir, you are mocking me."

"I, mademoiselle! I, mock the great heroine! I, mock the adopted daughter of the great Montaigne! The illustrious maid, of whom Lipsius wrote: '*Videamus quid sit paritura ista virgo*!' "

"Well, well," said she. "The gentleman who has just gone out must have been pleased to mock me, or maybe you yourself are bent on making mock of me. But no matter: youth can laugh at old age. I am still delighted to have welcomed two gentlemen so handsome and so witty."

Whereupon they separated. And a moment after, enter the real Racan, all out of breath. He was rather asthmatic, and the lady had her lodging on the third floor.

"Mademoiselle," he began without ceremony, "excuse me if I take a seat." He behaved with a very bad grace and stammered the while.

"Oh, what a ridiculous face, Jamyn!" said Mlle de Gournay.

"Mademoiselle, wait for a quarter of an hour and I shall tell you why I have come here, when I have got back my breath. What the devil brought you to take such a high lodging? Ah!"—with gasping breath—"what a height it is! Mademoiselle, I offer you my thanks for your gift, for your *Omble*"—so he pronounced it—"that you gave me: I am very greatly obliged to you."

But the maiden lady gazed at this man with an air of disdain.

"Jamyn," she said, "undeceive this poor gentleman. I have given copies only to such a one, and such: to M. de Malherbe and to M. de Racan."

"But, mademoiselle, I am he."

"Hark at him, Jamyn! The splendid fellow! The other two were at least agreeable. But this one is a rascally buffoon."

"Mademoiselle, I am the true Racan."

## MADemoisELLE DE GOURNAY

"I know not who you may be," she replied, "but you are the biggest fool of the three."

"Sdeath! I allow no trifling with me!"

Rage seized the old lady. Racan, not knowing what to do, noticed a collection of verses.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "take this book, and I'll say all my verses to you by heart."

But that gave her no appeasement. "Thieves! Thieves!" she cried. People came upstairs. Racan slung himself on to the cord of the staircase and managed to slide down by it. The same day she learned the whole story, and was in despair. She borrowed a coach and went to find him, early the next morning. Racan was still in bed, asleep. She drew the curtain. He perceived her and escaped into a closet. Capitulation was necessary to bring him out. Afterwards they were the best friends in the world, for she asked him pardon a hundred times. Bois-Robert acts this excellently; the farce they made of it is called "The Three Racans." And he played them before Racan himself, who laughed till the tears came, saying: "It's quite *ilue*, it's quite *ilue*!"

# MARSHAL DE BASSOMPIERRE



THE Marshal de Bassompierre came of a good family, between France and Luxembourg. Most of the places of that region have a German name as well as a French one: Betstein is the German name, and Bassompierre the French.

There is quite a pleasing story told. A certain Count of Angewellier, married to the Countess of Kinspein, had three daughters, for whom he found as husbands three gentlemen of the house of Croy, Salm and Bassompierre respectively. To each bride he gave an estate and a fairy pledge. Croy received a goblet and the lands of Angewellier; Salm, a ring and the lands of Phinstingue or Feneſtrange; and Bassompierre had a spoon and the lands of Answeiler. There were three abbeys which had the trust of these three pledges while the children were minors: Nivelles for Croy, Remenecour for Salm, and Épinal for Bassompierre. Whence comes the following tale.

Once upon a time, it is said, this Count of Angewellier met a fairy as he was returning from the hunt, lying asleep on a wooden couch, well fashioned for the time, in a chamber above the door of the castle of Angewellier. It was a Monday. Ever after, for the space of fifteen years, the fairy never failed to come there every Monday, and the count went there to find her. He was accustomed to sleep over this doorway when he returned late from the chase, or when he went off hunting in the early morning and did not want to wake his wife: for it was at some distance from the keep.

At last the countess noticed that every Monday without exception he slept in this room, and that he never failed to go to the hunt on that day, whatever the weather might be like, and so she wanted to know what could be afoot. So, having had a false key made, she surprised him abed with a beautiful lady. Both were asleep. She contented herself with removing the

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head-dress of this woman from a chair, and having spread it out on the foot of the bed, she went away without making a sound. The fairy, seeing herself thus discovered, told the count that she could see him no more, neither there nor elsewhere; and, after mutual shedding of tears for each other's lot, the fairy told him that her destiny forced her to be distant from him by a hundred leagues, but that in token of her love she was giving him a goblet, a spoon and a ring, which he was to give to his three daughters, and that these objects would bring happiness into the houses which they would enter, so long as these pledges were kept; but that if anyone stole one of them, every disaster would befall him.

This has been manifested in the house of M. de Pange, a gentleman of Lorraine, who stole from the Prince of Salm the ring, which he had on his finger, one day when he found him dozing after drinking too freely. This M. de Pange possessed forty thousand crowns of revenue, he had fine lands, he was steward of the treasury of the Duke of Lorraine. But, nevertheless, on his return from Spain, where he accomplished nothing though staying a long time, and where he must have spent large sums (he was there as ambassador to obtain the hand of a daughter of King Philip II for his master), he found his wife with child by a Jesuit, and all his wealth melted away. He died of grief, and three daughters whom he had given in marriage were all of them abandoned.

The Marquise d'Havr , of the house of Croy, was displaying the goblet, and let it fall. It broke into several pieces, which she gathered up and put back into the case, saying: "If I can't have it whole, I'll at least have its pieces." Next day, when the case was opened, she found the goblet as intact as it was before. A pretty little tale.

The marshal's father was a great Leaguer, a close friend of M. de Guise, and a man who saw service. It was under his roof that the oath of the League was taken among the great seigneurs. He died suddenly at the beginning of the League. The marshal had it in his blood to be a lover of women and a pretty wit, for his father was something of both.

On his arrival at Court (it was after the siege of Amiens) he fell by ill-luck into the hands of Sigongue, who was of such a satiric turn. He was an old fox who was steward of the King's stables. Seeing the important air of this youth, he wished to silence him, so, behaving like a newly-arrived provincial fellow, he blandly begged him to be good enough to present him to His



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Majesty. He went in and, with a laugh, said to the King: "Sire, here is a gentleman newly arrived from his province, who is anxious to pay his respects to Your Majesty." Every one burst out laughing, and the young gentleman was put mightily out of countenance.

It is said that, whilst he was playing with Henry the Fourth, the King noticed that there were some half-pistole pieces among the pistoles. Bassompierre said to him: "Sire, it is Your Majesty who wanted to make them pass for pistoles." "'Tis you!" answered the King. Bassompierre took the whole pile, put back the pistoles in their place, and then went and threw the half-pistoles to the pages and lackeys through the window. Upon this the Queen remarked: "Bassompierre acts the King, and the King acts Bassompierre." The King was annoyed by what she said. "She would be very glad if he *were* King," he retorted. "She would have a younger husband." Bassompierre was handsome and finely made. It seems to me that Bassompierre deserved scolding much more than did the Queen.

He has been accused of losing a friend rather than a chance for witticism. He has never had a reputation for courage, but, nevertheless, at Sables-d'Olonne he acquired some reputation, paid with his own person, and pointed the way to others, for he planted himself in the water up to his neck. As for war, he knew about it as a man who has never heard talk of it. But he was made Marshal of France none the less; but he wished M. de Créquy to have precedence: they called each other brother.

Let us say something of his love affairs. It has been said that he had been somewhat in love with the Queen-Mother. He was magnificent in his ways, and took the *capitainerie* of Monceaux, in order to feast the Court there. The Queen-Mother said to him one day: "You will be taking a goodly crowd of whores there." (Such was the language of the time.)

"I'll wager, Madame," said he, "that you will take more of them than I will."

Once he told her that there were few women who were not such. "And what of me?" she asked.

"Ah, you, Madame," he answered, "you are the Queen!"

One of his most celebrated loves was that for Mlle d'Entraques, the sister of Mme de Verneuil. For some time he was honoured by having King Henry the Fourth as a rival. Testu, the Chevalier of the night-guard, served His Majesty in this matter. One day when this man was come to speak with her,

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she concealed Bassompierre behind a tapestry, and said to Testu, who reproached her for not being so heartless towards Bassompierre as she was towards the King, that she cared not for Bassompierre any more than for the other. And as she spoke she tapped the curtain, at the place where Bassompierre was, with a switch that she had in her hand. But I think that the King had what he desired; for one day the King kissed her, I know not where, and Mlle de Rohan, the deformed sister of the late M. de Rohan, instantly penned the following quatrain to Bassompierre:

*Bassompierre, on vous avertit,  
Aussi bien l'affaire vous touche,  
Qu'on vient de baiser une bouche  
Dans la ruelle de ce lit.*

To which he replied immediately thus:

*Bassompierre dit qu'il s'en rit,  
Et que l'affaire ne le touche ;  
Celle a qui l'on baise la bouche  
A mille fois——*

“And I shall entrust the rhyme, when it may please you, into your own fair hands.”

Henry the Fourth said one day to Father Cotton, the Jesuit: “How would you act if you were bedded with Mlle d’Enragues?”

“I know what I ought to do, Sire,” said he, “but I know not whether I should do it.”

“He would do a man’s duty,” said Bassompierre, “and not Father Cotton’s duty.”

Mlle d’Enragues had a son by Bassompierre, who was long known as the Abbé de Bassompierre, and is now M. de Xaintes. She claimed an obligation of marriage against him, and the suit was referred to the parliament of Rouen, where he won the case. Bertinières pleaded on his behalf: he was a man who declared he did not know what it meant to be troubled at speaking in public, and that nothing was capable of astonishing him. The Marshal served him in having the approbation of the Court for the office of procurator-general to the parliament of Rouen, and had it given him for twenty thousand crowns. On her return from Rouen, she was showing off her little boy to Bautru. “Isn’t he pretty?” she asked.

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"Yes, he is," said Bautru. "But I find him looking rather the worse since your journey to Rouen!"

She never ceased to style herself "Mme de Bassompierre," as she still does. "If she needs a professional name," said Bassompierre, "she might as well have that as any other."

He was not at that time a marshal. Later he was told that she did not adopt the title of *la Maréchale de Bassompierre*.

"I dare say not," he said. "After all, she has not had sight of my baton since the promotion."

When he purchased Chaillot, the Queen-Mother said to him: "Why have you bought that place: it's a bottle of a house."

"Madame," he said, "I am a German."

"But that isn't being in the country, it's the outskirts of Paris."

"Madame, I am so fond of Paris that I would not like ever to leave it."

"But it's only fit to take wenches to."

"Madame, I shall take them."

It is thought that he was married to the Princess de Conti. The cabal of the house of Guise was the cause in the end of his being in prison, and his tongue too, in some measure, for he said: "We shall be such fools that we shall capture La Rochelle." He had a son by the Princess de Conti, who was called La Tour Bassompierre, and it is thought that he would have acknowledged him if he'd had the leisure for it. This La Tour was gallant and well made. In a combat at which he was acting as second, having to do with a man who for several years had lost the use of his right arm, but had had time to accustom himself to using his left, La Tour allowed his own right arm to be bound back and yet succeeded in vanquishing his opponent. He lodged with the marshal, but has since died of an illness.

In the course of every year Bassompierre won fifty thousand crowns in play from M. de Guise. Mme de Guise offered him a sum of ten thousand crowns a year if he would play no more with her husband. But he answered like the steward of Marshal de Biron: "I should be losing too much."

He was always very civil and very gallant. One of his lackeys once noticed a lady crossing the courtyard of the Louvre with no one to bear the train of her robe: he went out to take it himself, saying: "It must never be said that a lackey of the Marshal de Bassompierre's left a lady in such a plight!" It was the late Countess de La Suze, and she recounted this to the Marshal, who at once promoted the lackey to be one of his valets.

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One could wish that there was always somebody at Court like him: he did the honours, he received and entertained foreigners. I said that at Court he was like *Bel-Accueil* in the *Roman de la Rose*. This led to the nickname of *Bassompierre* being bestowed everywhere on those of surpassingly healthy looks. Wherefore a certain courtesan was styled *la Bassompierre*; and another was so called because of her good-humour. A youthful chair-bearer in the mountains of Savoy was dubbed *Bassompierre* because he had got two girls with child at Geneva. And talking of this cognomen of *Bassompierre*, a pleasant adventure once befell the Marshal himself on the river Loire. He was on his way to Nantes, and a lady beseeched a place in his vessel for herself and her daughter: she was going to Court to have a pardon sealed on behalf of her son. They were travelling all night. In the darkness he approached the daughter, and was ready to enter into the forbidden room, when suddenly a bargeman began to shout: "Turn the helm, *Bassompierre!*"

This took him by surprise, and even, I think, disarranged his plans. It was only afterwards that he learned that it was the steersman who was thus named, on account of his being the most agreeable bargee on all the river Loire.

A celebrated lady of ample experience used to say that M. de Guise was the best measure, M. de Chevreuse the finest corulgence, M. de Termes the most sparkling, M. de Bassompierre the handsomest and the most roguish of gallants.

Those I have just mentioned, along with M. de Créquy and M. de Gondy, then in charge of the galleys, used often to sup together, and made great play amongst themselves. But as soon as it was felt that the one who was the target was becoming disconcerted, another would be chosen: their followers preferred not to dine but just to listen to them.

I have already remarked elsewhere that he never danced well; he was not even a particularly good horseman; he had a certain clumsiness about him, and was not properly loosened in his limbs. At a ballet of the King's in which he was taking part, someone foolishly came to inform him, just as he was dressing to make his entry, that his mother had died. She was a good woman of practical ability to whom he owed much. "No, no," he said. "You're mistaken. She will not be dead until the ballet is finished."

On several occasions he went abroad as ambassador. He was telling the late King how at Madrid he made his entry



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mounted on the most beautiful little mule imaginable, which was sent to him in the King's name.

"Oh! A fine spectacle that must have been," said the King, "to see a donkey riding on a mule!"

"Very fine, Sire," said Bassompierre. "It was yourself whom I was representing."

The Queen-Mother used to say: "I love Paris so well and Saint-Germain so well that I should like to have one foot in one and the other in the other."

"Have you considered, Madame," said he, "the advantages of being at Nanterre?"

M. de Vendôme said to him, on meeting him somewhere, "You are no doubt one of M. de Guise's faction, for you love his sister, Princess de Conti?"

"That makes no difference to me," he answered. "I have loved all of your aunts, sir: but I do not like you any the better for that!"

Speaking of the resemblances that are to be found in every one to some beast, he said pleasantly that *his* beast was the Marquis de Thémînes. M. de La Rochefoucauld, malicious in jesting, sought to rally de Thémînes on this, but the latter told him that he would not suffer from him what he would from M. de Bassompierre. They almost fought.

M. de La Rochefoucauld said to him, shortly before his arrest: "There you are! Great and greasy and grey!"

"And there you are," he answered, "with your paint and taint and feint!" (La Rochefoucauld had dyed his beard.)

When he was in the Bastille he made a vow not to shave until he was out again; but at the end of a year he had himself clipped. He had there some sort of love affair with Mme de Gravelle, who was a prisoner there. This lady had been the mistress of the Marquis de Rosny, and later, for her intrigues, had been put under arrest. Cardinal Richelieu had been inhumane enough to have her put to the torture. After the Marshal's death, she was foolish enough to take to wearing a widow's cap, as well as Mme de Bassompierre.

Esprit, the Academician, went to see him in the Bastille. "Here is someone," said Bassompierre, "who is really lord of the land whose name he bears." Every one in the Bastille used to say: "I shall be able to get out of here in such-and-such a time." "And I," he used to say, "I shall get out when the governor does."

He was unwilling to leave the prison unless asked by the

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King, because, he said, he was an officer of the crown, a good servant of the King, and unworthily treated: "and besides, I have nothing to live on any longer." His estates were ruined. The Marquis de Saint-Luc said to him: "Come out once, and you'll go back sure enough afterwards." On coming out, he said it seemed to him that Paris was so full that you could walk from end to end of it on the roofs of coaches, and that he could find no beards on the men and no manes on the horses.

He was not long in returning to his post of Colonel of the Swiss guards. Coislin had been killed at Aire, and La Châtre had succeeded him; but as he was rather partial to the Beaufort faction, M. de Bassompierre was reinstated, he who had had four hundred thousand *livres* out of it. The other had bought it from Mme de Coislin. La Châtre and his wife, both of them young, died in misery after that. Bassompierre soon re-established the best table of the Court, and flourished.

It is to him that we owe the fact that the Cours-la-Reine, opposite the Invalides, still exists, for it was he who would not rest until it was recovered on the side of the water, and until a bridge of stone was built over the town ditch.

Although he was sixty-four, he was still agreeable and of healthy mien. As a matter of fact he became rather a sorry jester, for he was ever anxious that his wit should shine, and the fire of youth was no longer his, and often he did not hit the target. M. le Prince and his dandies used to jest over it.

On the outer staircase of the Luxembourg a certain lady of high rank, after complimenting him on his liberty, said to him: "But you have turned very white, Marshal." "Madame," said he, with open grossness, "I'm like the leeks: white on top, but green enough underneath." To a pretty girl, as consolation, he said: "Mademoiselle, how I regret my youth when I see you!"

When Marescot returned from Rome, having failed to secure the choice of M. de Beauvais as cardinal, he arrived with a very bad cold. "I'm not surprised at that," said Bassompierre. "He has come back without a hat!"

As he had robust health, and used to say that he did not yet know where his own stomach was, he took no care of himself. He used to eat great quantities of bad melons and peaches, which never ripen properly in Paris. Afterwards, he went off to Tamlay, where there was a wondrous upset: on his return, he lay sick for ten days in Paris at the house of Mme de Bout-hillier, who would not let him go until he was completely cured.

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Yvelin, the Queen's household physician, who had business in Paris, pressed him to return. At Provins he died during the night, in his sleep, and died so comfortably that he was found in the same position as he was wont to sleep in, with one hand under the bolster where his head was, and the knees a little raised. His stout and fleshy body was jolted home as far as Chaillot, where it was found that the vitals were all damaged: but the fact is that the body had decayed on the roads.

## CARDINAL DE RETZ



JEAN FRANÇOIS DE GONDY, now the Cardinal de Retz, is a small dark man who can only see what is very near him, ill made, ugly, and clumsy-handed at everything. When he writes he always makes great loops; there is not a straight line, and it is all just a scribble. I have seen for myself that he is unable to button up his clothes. On one occasion, at the hunt, M. de Mercœur had to put on his spur for him: he was quite unable to manage it properly himself. Formerly, of all the coins, he could recognise only the pistole and the quarter-crown. He was destined to be Chevalier of Malta, and, being born during a chapter, he was Chevalier from that day on: which would have let him be a grand cross of the order very early.

He had two brothers, both older than himself, the present duke, and the one who was called the Marquis des Îles d'Hyères: the former was of fair complexion. M. de Bassompierre used to say: "Well, as for him, it can't be said that he's of my stock." I have said elsewhere that the mother was a great prude. This boy used to say that he wanted to be a cardinal, in order to have superiority over his brother, and he certainly had ambition, but died in an unlucky way whilst hunting: having fallen from his horse, his leg was caught in the stirrup and he was killed by a kick on the head from the horse. With this boy gone, plans were changed, and the young Chevalier was destined for the Church. And so we find him as Abbé of Buzay, an abbey in Brittany. The cassock became him better than the sword, if not for his temperament, at least for his body. Even as I have portrayed him, he had none the less nothing of the air of a nincompoop: there was something of iron in his countenance.

As early as college, the abbot displayed his haughty temper. He could scarcely tolerate equals, and was often plunged in quarrels. From this time also he showed his liberal feelings:



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having learned once that a certain gentleman, quite unknown to him, had been arrested at the Châtelet for a matter of fifty pistoles, he found means of obtaining this sum and sent it to him.

Leaving here, he took to styling himself the Abbé de Retz, finding that the name of Buzay was rather too like *buzzard*. It was not yet customary at that time to refrain from using the name of a benefice; nowadays there is no ecclesiastic, be he never so humble, who does not call himself *abbé*, and those who are such in reality take the name of their family as well. He has told me that the stout Comte de La Rocheguyon wanted to give him all his property on condition that he would take the name of Silly,<sup>1</sup> but that at the time of his death the relatives prevented a notary from being brought to him. In telling me this, he said that if he had been a man of the sword, he would have greatly loved to cut a fine figure, and that he would have spent a great deal on clothes. I smiled. For, built as he is, he would only have been the worse, and I think would, indeed, have been a fearsome dancer and a fearsome horseman. Moreover, he is naturally uncleanly, and especially so at table. He is also absent-minded. So much so that at table once, as a practical joke, a partridge's head was put on his plate: he put it into his mouth without looking at it, and put his teeth into it. The feathers came out on all sides. He never eats but of the plate set before him. There is scarcely any man more sober.

He has inclinations towards love, has a fancy for gallantry, and wants to make a stir. But his dominant passion is ambition. His humour is curiously restless and he is tormented almost continually by the bile. In his early youth he saw much of his kinsfolk, and especially of Mme de Lesdiguières. I think he was in love with her, as well as with Mme de Guéméné. He also knew M. d'Ecquevilly, his kinsman, well. This gentleman had eyesight scarcely better than his, and it is said that once they looked for each other in a large courtyard for a good quarter of an hour, without managing to find each other, and that in the end two gentlemen took them each by the hand to bring them together. In the family society (of which Mme de Guéméné was part), one diversion amongst others was setting each other questions concerning *L'Astrée*,<sup>2</sup> and whoever did not answer satisfactorily had to pay for each error with a pair of gloves scented with frangipani. Two or three questions were sent on a paper to one person, such as "on which hand was Bonlieu, coming out from the bridge of La Bouteresse?"—and other like matters, whether of history or of topography. It was

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certainly the way to know one's *L'Astrée* well. So many pairs of gloves were lost on one side and the other that it was found, when it came to counting up, for marks were scrupulously kept, that almost nothing was owed by either side. D'Ecquevilly resolved on something else. He went to read *L'Astrée* at the house of M. d'Urfé himself, and, as he progressed in his reading, he had himself taken to the spots where each adventure had happened.

Our Abbé was on bad terms with his cousin, Mme de Schomberg, for there were two groups, that of the *Maréchale* and that of Mme de Lesdiguières, the latter being the stronger. At a family assembly, Mme de Lesdiguières obliged the Abbé to lead out Mme de Schomberg as partner to dance: she was quite deformed, had twisted feet, and could only half walk; she was hated; she was ugly and ill-natured.

About this time a man proposed to the Abbé to marry I know not what great heiress of Germany, a Catholic, whose name I have not been able to find out; he told him that her parents, being Lutherans, were doing her violence and that her hand was going to be given to one named Weimar, who was at the Academy in Paris. He lent his ear to this, and promised the man one of his two abbeys (for he had two of them); the other was called Quimperlay: they are worth eighteen thousand *livres* of income, or thereabouts. I have only been able to ascertain all this rather imperfectly. He made a journey to Germany, where he spoke with the girl, and he even fought with this Weimar, and won, not by skill but by headstrongness, for he is not less valiant than M. le Prince.

It was not his only duel. He fought on another occasion, and I think it was with the Comte d'Harcourt. I have heard him saying that this man said to him: "I'll soon have you on your back: this is no game for you." "But," he went on, "he left on a great shoulder-belt of buff leather (I don't think purposely), without which I'd certainly have wounded him, for I drove straight into it." He told me all this without naming anybody, and I have never known the origin of their quarrel.

He has also told me of a man at Court (and I learned later that it was himself) who was once shut up in a room with a lady of quality whose favours he enjoyed. Hearing a noise, he was forced to open from fear of being surprised: it was some armed men who were attacking him. He drove them back from the door, shut it again, and returned to embrace the fair one as if they had been in the greatest possible security. "One must

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have little fear for that," he said to me. "This same man, although he had been told that the husband wished to murder him, did not cease to go everywhere as he was wont, and without being otherwise accompanied." If this adventure is likely, I leave it to be judged. But by it one may judge the temper of the personage.

He fought another duel, with the Abbé de Praslin, now the Marquis de Praslin, who married Mlle d'Escars, younger sister of Mme d'Hautefort. He had the victory. But the Comte d'Harcourt, who attended Praslin, vanquished the second of the Abbé de Retz.

He has always been of a meddling humour. He boasted of knowing much concerning the designs of the Comte de Soissons, and that one day he took a packet to the Tuileries to M. de Thou, who afterwards said to him: "Upon my word, my good Abbé, you must surely think me a man of honour to have brought me that packet: 'tis mighty free-spoken!"

The injury done by Cardinal Richelieu against the elder Gondy for the office of the galleys, which he caused to be sold to him in spite of the latter, had outraged the Abbé. But without that, I wager, our man would not have ceased to be his enemy. He was too ambitious; he boasted that he and his father and his brother had been the only persons of standing who never yielded.

When there was a question of taking his doctorate at the Sorbonne, he dedicated his theses to various saints, so as not to be forced to dedicate them to the ruling powers. He wished to gain the advantage over the Abbé of Souillac (de la Mothe-Houdancourt), kinsman of M. de Noyers: he is now M. de Rennes. The authority of the Cardinal was invoked in the matter, and plenty of suggestions were offered to the Abbé de Retz; but he refused to yield what he had grasped and he spoke with great pride. It is true that the Sorbonne, in consideration of the Cardinal Gondy, supported his interests, and, I think, represented to the Cardinal that they could not abandon the nephew of a prelate to whom they were under such obligations. So he had the advantage over the other, and thereafter the Cardinal always called him "the bold little fellow," and said that he had the face of a gallows-bird. This dispute was the cause of his parents finding it advisable that he should make a voyage into Italy. Two of my brothers and myself were planning to go thither, and we prayed him to approve of our keeping him company. I conversed with him almost continually during ten



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months, and as he has as good a memory as anyone, for he knew by heart everything he had ever learnt, he told me many facts and stories.

I remarked that the first work which he wrote, apart from some sermons, was the *Conjuration de Fiesque*. That suited his humour well enough. He had made an epitaph for the Comte de Soissons, wherein he styled him *the last of the Heroes*.

He could not forgive Don Thaddeo, nephew of the then reigning Pope Urban, for not having possessed himself of the state of Urbino, which was then reverting to the Church, failing heirs male. We never passed a place on our journeying but he would take it by assault or otherwise. He spoke ceaselessly of his birth. He was warmly embraced at Florence by the Grand Duke, and lodged with the Chevalier de Gondi, who exercised the office of secretary of state and had been resident in France. The Chevalier had portraits of the French Gondis in his hall, for they are not such great seigneurs in Italy as they are in France. But they are gentlemen none the less: I have seen tokens enough in Florence: but the question is to know whether that is not since the favour of Albert. Quillet says that the Chevalier de Gondi gave a laugh one day when he asked him whether the Gondis of France were actually real Gondis. The Cardinal de Retz says that he is the only man in France who can furnish his thirty quarterings. (Villani and Machiavelli make no mention of the Gondis; M. de Thou says they were sons of a banker.)

Albert, who has made the family fortunes here, was the son of a Florentine banker who lived at Lyons, named Gondi, Seigneur du Perron, whose wife, also an Italian, had found a means of entering the service of Queen Catherine de Medici, and had had charge of the nourishment of the royal children of France in their long-clothes. It was said that she had given a receipt to the Queen for the conception of children, for the Queen was ten years without bearing any. And this so endeared her to the Queen that, having attained to the regency, in less than fifteen years, she advanced this woman's children to such advantage that whereas, on the day of the King's death, they had not two thousand *livres* income between them, Albert, on the death of Charles IX, was first gentleman of the chamber and Marshal of France, with a hundred thousand *livres* income at least in landed property, and more than eighteen hundred thousand in silver and personal property; his brother Pierre de Gondi, was Bishop of Paris, with thirty or forty thousand *livres* revenue in benefices, and personal property to the extent of more than



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two hundred thousand crowns; and M. de La Tour, the youngest of the three, when he died, was captain of fifty armed men, chevalier of the order like his eldest brother, and master of the wardrobe; and all three of them were in the privy council. So much I have learnt from a contemporary, who was well acquainted with it.

I have heard a story which illustrates the good sense of this Marshal de Retz. Charles IX had a greyhound of which he was very fond, and he knew that a certain gentleman of Normandy had an extremely good one. He had it brought, and the gentleman as well. A hare was started with these two dogs, but the gentleman's greyhound made a better show than his. Already somewhat put out by this, the King recalled that this gentleman, who was doubtless a poor enough courtier, had outstripped him in the ardour of the chase, and suddenly the King dealt him a blow with his riding-switch. Next day the Marshal attended at the King's rising, and was very gloomy. "What is the matter?" asked the King.

"The truth of the matter is, Sire, that you have lost the heart of all your nobility."

"I understand you," said the King. "I am wrong. I am no more than a gentleman myself. I want to give him satisfaction." And indeed the King begged him to excuse him, in front of every one. At that moment news was received of a small government falling vacant. The Marshal said to the King: "Sire, you should give it to him." Which the King accordingly did. The gentleman behaved well in the matter, for he always let it be understood that the King had given it to him of his own free will.

The Cardinal knew that there was a manuscript of M. de Brantôme in the keeping of the MM. du Puy, containing several volumes in one of which the loves of the Duchesse de Retz, wife of Albert, were recounted, and many things greatly to this lady's honour. He would not rest until MM. du Puy allowed him to efface all that reflected upon his grandmother, and the manuscript is effaced so thoroughly that not a word of it could be traced.

The Gondy who built the Hôtel de Condé and laid out the Gondy garden at Saint-Cloud was a man of luxurious tastes. It is said that when he was dining once with some friends of his, at a distance of five leagues from Saint-Cloud, he found that there were no crystal glasses. He called to one of his men: "Go and fetch me one from Saint-Cloud—and don't mind killing my

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horse to do it." The man went. The horse succumbed on arrival, and the man, while dismounting, broke the glass. This man fully deserved to die a beggar, as he did.

To return to where we were, at Florence. A young gentleman who was in his train, for he had four, and the rest in proportion, took it into his head to have a taffetas doublet made with bands that were not hemmed. One day the Grand Duchess and Mlle de Guise happened to pass, and they split their sides laughing at the sight of this extravagance, for this man was at the door, and had the appearance of being clad in spider-webs, so many threads did he have on his arms and body.

The Grand Duchess was one of the most beauteous persons in Italy, but she had only a poor fellow for a husband. He used to wear five or six skull-caps one on top of the other, and took some off, or put some on, according as his thermometer indicated. When he lay with her, all the state of Tuscany was in prayer. That did not often happen. I think that in the end he had an heir.

At Venice, where we went afterwards, the ambassador of France (it was the president Mallier) lodged him alone with a personal servant. (The ambassador's lady, by the way, was such a fool that she used to say "my post," referring to the embassy.) The Comte de Laval, brother of M. de La Trimouille, had retired to Venice. I think that he said, speaking of the Abbé: "He will not fail to call on me." The Abbé never went near him, and spoke of him with very little esteem. He said that when the Comte went to La Rochelle, the townspeople put on his door: *Neither more nor less*. Which meant that they cared about him neither more nor less.

At Rome he had a good lodging, and kept a pretty good table. There was some talk because he knew more about this than many cardinals and prelates. He wanted to make us believe that the constable Colonne, to whose house he said that of Gondi was closely allied, had complained strongly that he had not seen him, but that he had not dared, on account of the constable being of the Spanish party, for he was constable of Naples.

He was no less restless at Rome than at Paris, and he made us make a ridiculous journey in the month of November to see the alum mines. We set off, as if it had been for some matter of great import, in a very heavy rain, and the Italians said: "This man's taking French leave." We were not more than three months in Rome, and he made us set off at Christmas to return to France. He pretended that a man had sought him out

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in a church and had given him news which obliged him to leave Italy promptly. (It was the birth of the King, 1638.) Although I was only eighteen years old I could see that he was beginning to be short of money, and he would even have been embarrassed on his arrival, for his letters of credit were delayed, if we had not given him all that we had to receive. For one thing he deserves praise: that neither at Rome, nor at Venice, did he see any women, or else he saw them so secretly that we could find out nothing about it. He used to say that he did not want to give anyone a grip on him.

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal de Retz's mother was Françoise Marguerite de Silly.

<sup>2</sup> The pastoral romance by Honoré d'Urfé.

## LA FONTAINE



CERTAIN prentice of letters and maker of verses, La Fontaine by name, is likewise a great dreamer. His father, who is the master of the woods and waters of Château-Thierry in Champagne, was at Paris for a lawsuit, and said to him: "You might go and do such-and-such for me: it's urgent!" La Fontaine went off, and no sooner was he out of the house than he forgot what his father had asked him. He fell in with some com-

panions of his, who asked him if he had anything particular to do. "No," said he, and off he went to the playhouse with them.

Another time, coming from Paris, he tied to the bow of his saddle a large bag of important papers. It was badly tied, and fell off. The mail courier passed by, picked up the bag, and having overtaken La Fontaine asked him whether he had not lost anything. The youth looked all round: "No," said he, "I haven't lost anything."

"Here's a bag I have found," said the other.

"Ah! That's my bag!" cried La Fontaine. "It's got all my wealth there!"

And he carried it all the way home in his arms.

This youth went once and stole away a little dog from the house of the wife of the lieutenant-general of Château-Thierry, because it was too good a watch-dog. And when the lady's husband was away he hid himself under a table of her room, which was covered with a cloth. This lady had brought in a friend to sleep with her. When he perceived that this friend was snoring he approached the bed, and took the hand of the lady, who was still awake. By good fortune, she did not cry out, and at the same time he told her his name. She took that for so great a sign of love, that, I think, she granted him everything, though he said that he had somewhat less. He got out before the friend was awakened, and as in these small towns people are always in



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and out of each other's houses, nothing strange was noticed in his being seen coming out at an early hour from a house which was more or less public.

Since then, his father found him a wife, and he married out of complaisance. His wife declares that he dreams so much, that sometimes he is three weeks without remembering that he is a husband. She is a coquettish creature, and her conduct has been irregular for some time. He is in no way concerned by that. They say to him: "But so-and-so is playing with your wife." "I'faith!" says he, "let him do what he can. I care not two pins. He'll grow tired of her as I've done." This indifference has infuriated the woman. She pines away with chagrin. He takes his love where he finds it. A certain procuress having retired to the town, he gave her lodging, and one day his wife surprised them. He merely forbore, bowed, and left.

# THE PRESIDENT AND BLAISE PASCAL



RESIDENT PASCAL bore this title because of his having been president at Clermont in Auvergne. He is a man who has had a good many worthy employments. He was well-to-do, and a man of knowledge especially, and had applied himself to the mathematics; but he was more notable in his children than in himself, as we shall see from what follows.

When the reduction in interests was made, he and a certain man of Bourges, together with an advocate of the council, whose name I have not been able to ascertain, made a great to-do, and at the head of four hundred moneyed persons like themselves, greatly alarmed the keeper of the seals, Séguier, and Cornuel. Cardinal Richelieu had the two others put into the Bastille, but Pascal concealed himself so well that he could not be discovered, and was a long time without daring to show himself. In the midst of all this, the Saintot girls and his daughter, who is now a religious, played a comedy, of which the latter had written nearly all the lines, being only twelve years of age at the time.

Cardinal Richelieu at this time had the fanciful idea of having a performance of Scudéry's *The Prince Disguised* played by children. Bois-Robert took charge of it. He chose, as you may guess, this Pascal girl, and took also Socratine, one of the little Saintots, and little Bertaut, her brother. (She was called Socratine, by the way, on account of her severity, and is now a Carmelite nun.) The performance was a success, but the little Pascal came out of it the best. As she was being praised, she asked to come down, and of her own accord, without saying anything to anyone, she went and threw herself at the feet of His Eminence and recited to him, with tears, ten or twelve lines of her

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making, in which she asked for the return of her father. The Cardinal kissed her several times (for she was a pretty little thing), praised her for her dutifulness, and said to her: "My pretty one, write to your father and tell him to come back: I shall help him." And in truth he did, and kept him ten years in stewardship for a half of Normandy, for he had renounced his function in favour of one of his brothers. They were both natives of the Auvergne.

His daughter wrote other verses. I have some of them. In the end, at eighteen years of age, she turned to a life of devotion, and, as I have said, became a nun.

The president Pascal has left a son, Blaise Pascal, who gave witness from his youth up of his inclination towards the mathematics. His father had forbidden him to devote himself to this science until he had mastered Latin and Greek. This child, between twelve and thirteen years, read Euclid in secret, and already worked out some propositions. His father found some of them one day. He summoned him and said: "What is this?"

The boy, all trembling, replied: "I only amused myself with them on holidays."

"And do you really understand this proposition?"

"Yes, father."

"And where have you learnt that?"

"In Euclid. I've read the first six books of him." (Usually that is all one reads at first.)

"When did you read them?"

"The first one in an afternoon, and the others in less time, in proportion."

You should remember that one is six months before understanding them well.

Later, this boy invented a wonderful machine for arithmetic. During the last years of his father's office, having to work for him on the accounts of immense sums for the *taille* taxes, it occurred to him that by means of certain wheels one could make all kinds of arithmetical rules work infallibly. He worked at this, and made the machine, which he thought would surely be of great service to the community. But it happened that it cost at the least four hundred *livres*, and that it was so difficult to make that there was only one artificer, a man at Rouen, who could make it. Moreover, it was necessary for Pascal to be with him. It is about fifteen inches long, and about the same height. The Queen of Poland took away a couple. A few amateurs had some made. This machine, and the mathematics, ruined the health of this hapless young Pascal.

## THE PRESIDENT AND BLAISE PASCAL

His sister, a nun at the Port-Royal of Paris, made him familiar with the Jansenists. He became one himself. It was he who wrote those beautiful *Provincial Letters*, which were admired throughout Europe, and which were put into Latin by M. Nicole. For a long time nobody knew who was their author. For my own part, I would never have suspected it, for the mathematics and the art of letters scarcely accord very well together. These people of the Port-Royal gave him the material, and he made use of it according to his own taste. We shall have more to say of it in the *Memoirs of the Regency*.



# THE CHEVALIER DE ROQUELAURE



ANTOINE, the Chevalier de Roquelaure, is a kind of madman, and the greatest blasphemer in the kingdom as well. It is said that he has amended a little. At Malta he was put into a well, where he was left awhile as a punishment. With the fleet, the Comte d'Har-court was on the point of pitching him overboard with a ball slung from his feet. But that made him no whit the better, for, a few years later, having discovered at Toulouse some persons as crazy as himself, he said Mass in a tennis-court, baptized and married dogs, and committed all the impieties you could imagine.

Justice was informed of what went on, and men went to the place, but the blasphemers defended themselves. But in the end he was captured. A few days later he corrupted his gaoler with a sum of six hundred pistoles. The gaoler escaped with him, whereby he came to no good, for the Chevalier took his money from him, and sent him back as a rascal. They were pursued, and the Chevalier was recaptured. His elder brother lost no time, and obtained a quashing of the judgment, or rather a royal interference to prevent the matter going further. This saved his life.

So here is the Chevalier at Paris. But instead of retiring, or at least living quietly, he walked abroad in sight of every one, never stirring much from the tavern, and went on leading his usual life. A few religiously-minded people represented to the Queen that her regency could never prosper while this sacrilege was left unpunished. So orders were given, without Cardinal Mazarin being informed, to the provost of the Île de Paris to arrest the Chevalier. Which he did, but not without taking some of his archers, and at the Chevalier's side, Biran, one of his

## THE CHEVALIER DE ROQUELAURE

brothers, a great swordsman, was wounded. He was taken to the Bastille, where he was kept a good long time. The Cardinal gave the Marquis assurance that his brother's life was safe, and, so far as the imprisonment was in question, his relatives would have been delighted for him to be kept there for ever. There was some murmuring at Court over this severity, and the women even said aloud that "no man of quality had ever been known to be arrested for trifles like that." Mme de Longueville was among these.

Afterwards he was taken to the Conciergerie, and there was definite talk of his being brought to trial. At that time someone remarked to him that he was running a risk, and that he had God as his opponent; and he answered: "God hasn't so many friends in parliament as I have." Although there were plenty of witnesses, an order was nevertheless given that the sworn information should be fuller against him; and this was perhaps done so that he might have time to get the witnesses to escape. But the Chevalier opined, no doubt, that the surest way was to escape himself. The wife of the warden of the prison, Du Mont, was a great coquette, and the prisoner often paid the cost of a night's dancing on her behalf. She became infatuated with him. He consoled himself with her quite pleasantly, won her over, and in the end she had a hole made by which he escaped, after a year's imprisonment. It is said that he was playing piquet with the stout La Taulade, who was there for his debts, when word was brought to his ear that the hole was made. He did not wait to be told twice, but went out saying that he had a word to speak with someone. La Taulade, tired of waiting for him, went to see why he was so long. He discovered the hole. The opportunity seemed good to him, and he wanted to follow suit. But no, he could not manage to get through. The measurements had not been taken for him!

The day after the Chevalier's escape, there turned up a dozen witnesses against him. Perhaps he had had word of this, and it is apparently this which obliged his lover not to delay longer. She was arrested, with her husband, and taken to the Châtelet. I think there were no proofs against her. For my own part I should have pardoned her on account of her generous spirit. For she had preferred to deprive herself of a man she loved, rather than see him a prisoner.

He came back a year later, and nothing more was said. He is a pleasant fellow enough. He calls his brother-in-law cuckold. One does not heed all he says. It is believed that he was in love

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with Madame la Princesse, and he told her all that he pleased. He followed her to Bordeaux, but he did not follow her into Flanders. He said pleasingly, when M. de Luynes, the Jansenist, sent to ask a dispensation to marry his aunt, Mlle de Montbazon: "People of our religion would not do that." He was very melancholy, he used to say, because he had been forbidden to sing Mass. Once he said: "I have just come from that brothel of Mme de Roquelaure's." (Meaning the wife of the Marshal.) She used to say to him: "Chevalier, I'm feeling sad: make me laugh."

One day Romainville, a man of notorious impiety, and a friend of his, was lying at the point of death, and a Franciscan came to hear his confession. The Chevalier took up a gun, and, aiming at the reverend father, said: "Stand back, father, or I'll kill you. He's lived like a dog, he must die like a dog!" This made Romainville laugh so heartily that he got better. None the less, the Chevalier himself made confession some years later, and died like a different man, saying that he did not fear anything save that he would not have time enough to repent properly. He had very swollen legs, and said: "I wish to bequeath them to Laverdens." This was a brother of his, who was very fat.

## MARION DE L'ORME



IF she had wanted to marry, Marion de l'Orme would have had twenty-five thousand crowns as her dowry: her father was a man of property. But she did not. She was a beautiful person, and with a fine bearing, and one who did everything with a good grace. She had not a very lively wit, but she sang well, and played pleasingly on the theorbo. Her nose used to get red sometimes, and for that she would spend whole mornings

with her feet in water. She was magnificent, extravagant, and naturally lascivious.

She admitted that she had had a desire for seven or eight men, but not more. Des Barreaux was the first; Rouville next (but he is not very handsome: it was for her that he fought with La Ferté Senectère); Miossens (to whom she wrote, from a whim that she had to sleep with him); Arnould; Cinq-Mars; M. de Châtillon; and M. de Brissac.

She used to tell how Cardinal Richelieu had once given her a ring of sixty pistoles value, which came from Mme d'Aiguillon. "I regarded that," she said, "as a trophy." She went there disguised as a page. She was somewhat jealous of Ninon.

Little Quillet, who was on familiar terms with her, said that hers was the most beautiful body one could see.

She was thirty-nine when she died, but none the less she was as fair to look on as ever. Except for the frequency of her being with child, she would have been beautiful until she was sixty. Shortly before she fell ill, she took a rather strong dose of anti-mony to kill a child in her womb, and it was this which killed her. She was found to have over twenty thousand crowns worth of clothes. Gloves never lasted her more than three hours. She took no money, nothing but finery. Most frequently the bargain was struck for so many *marcs* weight of silverware.

Her reckless spending and the disorder of her family affairs



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obliged her to put in pledge the necklace given her by Émery. Of this large man she used to say, that he was agreeable in conversation, and clean. He carried through some matters of business for her, and this necklace was not given outright: it was in some such way as that. But he did nothing for her brothers.

Housset, now the overseer of the treasury, withdrew this necklace and then kept it. He was aflame for her, but dared not incur the expense.

Amelot, the chief president of the taxation tribunal, was treating with her when she died. A little before, La Ferté Seneçtere, taking advantage of the state of necessity in which she was, was minded to take her to Lorraine. But she was advised to take care not to do this, for he would have put her into a seraglio. Chevry was always her stop-gap, when she had no one better.

When she went to solicit the help of the late president de Mesmes in having her brother Baye let out of prison, where he had been put for debts, he said to her: "Ah! mademoiselle, is it possible that I have lived so long as this without having set eyes on you?" He conducted her as far as the street door, handed her into her coach, and saw to her business that same day. Just consider how things were with her: another woman doing as she did would have brought disgrace on her family; but as one lived with her without loss of respect, after she was dead, all her kinsfolk were left as they had been, and a good deal was thought of them out of love for her. She paid almost all of their expenses.

She made confession ten times during the illness of which she died, although she was ill but two or three days: she had always something new to tell. She was to be seen lying dead on her bed for twenty-four hours, with a maiden's crown on her head. In the end the *curé* of Saint-Gervais said that this was ridiculous.

She had three sisters, all well formed. The youngest followed her sister's way of life, and always will. She is spoilt by the smallpox, but she does not leave off her accommodating ways.

Mme de la Montagne, the eldest, was foolish enough to say, as one does in a proverbial way: "We may be poor, but we are honest." Yet M. de Moret all but broke his neck once in climbing a rope-ladder to a room on the third floor where she had given him an assignation. Her other older sister was married to Maugeron, who was treasurer of the artillery and lodged at the

## MARION DE L'ORME

Arsenal. The grand-master of the artillery, now the Marshal de La Meilleraye, after the death of his wife, became infatuated with her. It is said that he had lent her some diamond earrings, and she was going to return them on the following day, when he begged her to keep them, and afterwards pressed her in such-wise that, not being able to have anything from her, he gave her a slap, with the taunt that his money was as good as that of the Duke de Retz. Scandal had been rife about him. But the grand-master was not content with this. He dismissed her husband from the Arsenal, and injured the family in every way.

# THE SPIRIT OF MONTMARTRE



CERTAIN Collet, who lived in the quarter of Montmartre, was nicknamed "the spirit of Montmartre," on account of his gift of ventriloquy, whereby it seemed that a spirit was speaking from far up in the air.

With this voice of his, he has had Masses said for the release of souls in Purgatory. He has nearly made people die of fright, and has made others fall into a fever. On one occasion Cardinal Richelieu was minded to make game of the Bishop of Lavaur, whom the Jansenists have dressed down so thoroughly, and caused this man to mingle amongst the throng accompanying the Cardinal to the Tuileries, amongst whom was this Bishop. In the middle of the long alley he began to call out: "Abra de Raconis! Abra de Raconis!" For such was the Bishop's name. Raconis, hearing his name called, turned his head, but said nothing for the moment.

The voice went on. He began to grow terrified. At last, all of a sudden, he cried out: "Monseigneur! I crave pardon if I seem to lack the respect which I owe to your Eminence, but for some time I have been holding myself back. There is a voice in the air: I hear it calling me."

The Cardinal and all the others declared they heard nothing. Silence was commanded, and the voice said to him: "I am the soul of your father, who has been suffering long in Purgatory, and have had permission from God to come and warn you to change your way of life. Are you not ashamed to be paying court to the great men of the earth, instead of being in the churches?"

Raconis, paler than death itself, and imagining that the devil was already at his heels, protested that he was at Court only because His Eminence had given him reason to hope that he could be of some service there, but that——and so on and so forth.

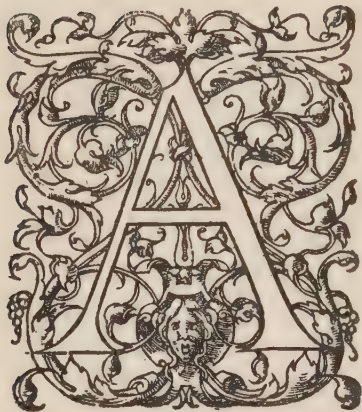
## THE SPIRIT OF MONTMARTRE

After having furnished some diversion by this means, Raconis was taken to his lodging, where he almost died of terror, and it was more than four days before he could be disabused of his belief. The Cardinal was somewhat ashamed of it, and, in making him a bishop, sent him his papal bulls gratis. When he became a bishop he took a page. He gave his name of Raconis to a hamlet called Perdreau, near Montfort-L'Amaury. There he made a good deal of ill-judged expenditure, for his house was not worth the upkeep, and he handed it over to his nephew without having paid his debts. One of his finest qualities was his skill at a kind of football. He was of gentle birth. He confessed to one of his friends, during the illness that ended in his death, that his pain at having been so cruelly handled by those Jansenists of Port-Royal was driving him to the grave.

This same Collet played an identical trick, and at the same place, on M. Mangot, the magistrate to the council. He put him on his knees as he did Raconis. Neufvillette had in his regiment of light horse a trooper who could do this trick, and used to make the peasants bring their money and their clothes and everything they had, to wherever suited him, and then went to collect the booty when they were gone off.



# MADemoisELLE PAULET



ANGÉLIQUE PAULET was the daughter of a native of Languedoc who invented the tax known as the *Paulette*, a device which was perhaps the ruin of France. Her mother was of very humble origins, and of a family ill-famed for their love affairs. She used to say that her father was a gentleman. Her mother led rather a rakish existence. Mlle Paulet had great vivacity, was pretty, danced well, played upon the lute, and sang more sweetly than anyone of her time: the story is told that two nightingales were found dead beside a fountain where she had been singing all day. But she had hair so golden that it could pass for red.

The father, wishing to profit by the beauty of his daughter, and the mother, who was a coquette, received all the Court under their roof. M. de Guise was the first man whose name was mentioned with hers. It used to be said that he left a shoe in coming down out of a window. He said he had always a vision of the little Paulet before his eyes. M. de Chevreuse followed, and it was this affair which did her fame the most harm, for he had given her jewels to the tune of twenty thousand crowns in a casket. She entrusted this to one named Descoudrais, from whom he had it stolen.

The ballet of the Queen-Mother, of which I have spoken elsewhere, was performed about this time. In it she sang those lines of *Lingendes* which began:

*Je suis cet Amphion, etc.*

Well, although that would have suited Arion better, she was none the less mounted on a *dolphin*, and this gave rise to the verse:

*Qui fit le mieux au ballet ?  
Ce fut la petite Paulet  
Montée sur le dauphin,  
Qui monta sur elle enfin.*

But the Dauphin made no great success, and his father took his place. Henry the Fourth, at this ballet, was eager to welcome the fair singer afterwards. And every one combined to see that he satisfied his wish. It was to her that he was going on the day he was killed. It was to take M. de Vendôme there. He wanted to make this prince a gallant: perhaps he had already noticed that this young gentleman had no taste for women.

The Chevalier de Guise also was a lover of Mlle Paulet's. M. de Bellegarde, M. de Termes and M. de Montmorency were also among her adorers. M. de Termes treated his feeling lightly enough, but in real fact he was deeply in love with her. His brother was not otherwise, but he would have been angry had he thought that his brother had had more success with her than he. This M. de Termes played Mlle Paulet an unkind trick. A youth belonging to Bordeaux, named Pontac, of good origin and well-to-do, wished to marry her, it is said. Termes without warning thrashed him with a stick. He retired to Bordeaux, and she afterwards refused ever to see a lover who treated his rivals with such cruelty.

Some time afterwards she separated from her mother, and withdrew for some days to Châtillon, with an honest woman named Mme Du Jardin, with whom she lived in Paris. She had already taken leave of M. de Montmorency, who was then very young. He imagined he would be able to enter her house more easily in the country than in Paris, and set off alone on horseback to go there. Some charcoal-burners, to a considerable number, for it was on the road to Chevreuse, where much charcoal is made, saw this well-fashioned youth, quite alone, and were convinced that he was going to fight. They surrounded him and made him promise not to pass further. It was so near to Châtillon that Mlle Paulet recognised him, and nearly died of laughing over the adventure. It seems that, for fear of being recognised, he preferred to turn back. This Mme Du Jardin, a woman of piety, retired to Ville-L'Évêque, where she lived as if she were a nun. This obliged Mlle Paulet to take a house separately. It was at this time that her mother died.

Mme de Rambouillet, who had been drawn towards this girl from the time of the Queen-Mother's ballet, after having let a good time go past for the purging of her reputation, and seeing that in her retirement no ill had been spoken of her, began to allow Mlle Paulet to see her from time to time. This was at the request of Mme de Clermont-d'Entraques, a woman of high virtue and a good friend of hers. Mme de Clermont had taken

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the girl so much into her friendship that she would not rest until Mlle Paulet came to lodge with her. Her husband, a very foolish man otherwise, for a long time thwarted their friendship, either because he was afraid of the reputation that the girl had had, or, as seems more likely, for Mme de Clermont is not at all pretty, because he feared that his wife made gifts to Mlle Paulet, who at that time was going to law against several persons for the recovery of her property. It was this friendship which was most helpful to Mlle Paulet in restoring her good fame, for after this Mme de Rambouillet received her as a friend, and this lady's high virtue purified, as it were, Mlle Paulet, who was afterwards cherished and esteemed by all.

She obtained about twenty thousand crowns of her wealth, with which she carried out great works of charity. She used to provide for an aged kinswoman at her own house.

The ardour of her love, her courage, her pride, her lively eyes, and her too golden hair led to her being given the name of "the Lioness." One quality of hers which did not betoken a good judgment was that she used to affect an intolerable prudery. She sent to the Madelonettes a girl of her household who found herself with child, and afterwards she took one so ugly that the devil himself would have been afraid of her. She did not write at all well, and sometimes she showed a rather malicious tongue. She loved and hated with equal violence. It was she and Mme de Clermont who introduced M. Godeau, later Bishop of Grasse, to the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

One evening she went to the Hôtel de Rambouillet disguised as a pastry hawker. Her basket was one of those Flemish ones with pink ribbons, her linen dress being all covered with ribbons and her little flat bonnet in the same style. She played with the little pastries, and was not recognised until she sang the song.

She did not lack lovers after her conversion, but of none was any wrong spoken. Voiture said that she had as her devoted servants a cardinal (for Cardinal La Valette used laughingly to call her his mistress); a doctor of theology (this was an impertinent fellow named Dubois); a merchant of the Rue Aubry-Boucher (one Bodeau, a linen merchant); a commandant of Malta (the commandant de Sillery); a councillor of the Court; a poet (Bordier, the royal poet for the ballets, an impertinent creature who thought to turn her mad); and a town provost (a certain Saint-Brisson Séguier).

This gentleman of the Rue Aubry-Boucher was a character.



## MADemoiselle PAULET

He was possessed of a great friendship for Mme de Rambouillet, but that which he cherished for Mlle Paulet could be called *love*. On the late King's entry on the return from La Rochelle, he took it into his head, for he was the captain of his quarter, to put all his soldiers into green uniforms, for this was the colour of the fair lady. All these "green gallants" of his went and fired a salvo before the house where she was with Mme de Rambouillet, Mme de Clermont and others. The Lioness, who took no pleasure in having the affection of such a person, was blushing over it for a good hour. But, none the less, she had to overcome her wrath and go with the others to her gallant's garden in the Saint-Victor quarter, where he offered them a banquet. His wife happened to die, and he married again a person whom he desired excessively because she bore a resemblance to Mlle Paulet. At the age of sixty he went on pilgrimage to Rome. If the Lioness had still been alive when this man's daughter showed such ill-temper against Mme de Saint-Etienne, how she would have devoured her!

But I was forgetting a pretty compliment which Mme de Rambouillet paid to Mlle Paulet the first time that she visited Rambouillet. She had her received at the entrance to the town by all the fairest maidens of the place, and by those of the house itself, all crowned with flowers and very prettily dressed. One of them, more conspicuously decked than her companions, presented her with the keys of the castle, and when she set foot on the bridge, two small pieces of artillery on one of the towers were fired.

Mlle de Paulet died in 1651, under Mme de Clermont's roof, in Gascony, whither she had gone to keep her company. The Bishop of Grasse (M. Godeau) went there expressly from Provence to attend at her death-bed. She appeared to be barely forty, but yet she was fifty-nine. Every one would have it that she was older than she was. Which came from her having made such a stir very early in life.



## FATHER ANDRÉ



HE Augustinian Father André, vulgarly known as "Little Father André," belonged to the Boulanger family of Paris, a good family connected with the law. He preached an infinite number of Lenten and Advent sermons, but he always preached like a mountebank, not because he had the intention of making people laugh, but because he was by nature a buffoon, and had even a certain resemblance in his face to the charlatan Tabarin.

In conversation he spoke just as he preached.

He made so little endeavour that when he had said some rascalities, he used to punish himself. But he was born to do these things, and could not prevent himself. When he was preaching an Advent sermon in the Saint-Germain parish, the late Archbishop of Paris, urged by I know not what cabal of monks of whom he was one of the leaders, sent to fetch him and kept him in confinement at the Archbishop's palace. The Bishop of Metz took offence at this, saying that "the Archbishop had no power to have a religious arrested who was preaching in a parish depending from the abbey of Saint-Germain." And he succeeded in having him released, but on condition that he would preach more prudently. So he climbed into his pulpit again, but never in his life was he so hampered: he was so afraid of saying something that would offend that he said not a word that was worth anything, and was obliged to make an end rather abruptly. He was a good religious and had a great following of all manner of people: by some, for amusement, but by the rest because he appealed to them. The truth is that he had a talent for preaching. A number of stories are told of him, of which I have collected the best.

He said once that "Saint Christopher almost threw the little Jesus into the stream, so heavy did he find Him: but you cannot drown anyone who has been hanged."

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Preaching Lenten sermons at Saint-André-des-Arcs, he kept complaining that the ladies came to church too late. "When the servant comes to waken you," he told them, "'Goodness gracious,' you say, 'what an agony to rise so early!' And you argue with your pillow. 'Marie!' you say to your chambermaid, 'I'll wager that clock hasn't struck yet: you're always hurrying me so. It isn't so late as you say.' Oh, if *I* were there!" he added, "*I'd* set you stirring with a vengeance!"

Speaking of Saint Luke, he said that "he was the Queen-Mother's painter, and that by a better title than that of Rubens, who painted the gallery of the Luxembourg: for is he not the painter of the Queen-Mother of God?"

He was preaching once on the text: *I have bought a piece of ground and I must needs go and see it.* "What a fool you are!" said he, "you ought to go and see it before buying."

On the feast of the Magdalene, he started to describe the gallants of Mary Magdalene, and he dressed them in the fashion of the moment: "In a word," he said, "they were togged up like those two great donkeys there in front of my pulpit." And every one rose in their places to see two fops there, who, for their part, took good care not to rise. Another day, after delivering a great harangue against the dissolute life of this unfortunate sinner, the Magdalene, he was seized with an idea: "Down there," he said, "I can see one who is very like the Magdalene, and now, because she does not mend her ways, I am going to mark her out and throw my handkerchief at her head." And as he said the words, he took his handkerchief and made as if to throw it. At once all the women lowered their heads. "Ah!" he cried, "I thought there was but one. And here there turn out to be a hundred and more!"

He used to say that there were "men-Magdalenes" as well as the female sort. "Our father Saint Augustine," he said, "was just such a one for many a long day." And then, describing the perfumes of Mary Magdalene, he said: "She had water. Angel water, think you? No, it was black angel water, water of the fiend, water of Satan!"

And that reminds me of a tale told of a preacher of Francis the First's time. "The Magdalene," he said, "was not just an ordinary little light-o'-love, like the ones that might give themselves to you or me. No, she was a great one like Mme d'Étampes!" Mme d'Étampes had him forbidden the pulpit. A few years afterwards, having been reinstated as a preacher,

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he was discoursing on the feast of the Magdalene, and said: "My brethren, I once found myself in trouble for making comparisons. You must picture the Magdalene to yourselves as you please. Let us pass over the first part of her life and come to the second."

Father André once compared women to an apple-tree standing on the highway. "The passers-by grow desirous of these apples. Some pluck them, others knock them down. And there are even some who climb up and shake them for you like the very deuce!" He said to some women hearers: "You complain of the fast-days. They make you thin, you say? Wait, wait a moment," he said, and brandished a stout arm. "I fast every day, and *this* is the very least of my members!"

"All women have slanderous tongues," he said. "I'll wager there is not one who has not. Let her stand up!" Then he paused. "Well," he went on, "you see that not one dares to rise."

An advocate went to make confession to him, and had very little to tell. As penance he ordered him to go to his afternoon sermon. The advocate was there. The Gospel of the day was *Dæmonium mutum*, etc. "Do you know," said he, "what a *dæmonium mutum* is? I shall tell you. It is an advocate at the feet of his confessor. At the bar they have plenty to chatter about, but before a confessor, devil a word can you get out of them."

He had a grudge against the *curé* of Saint-Severin, and turned his discourse on to the keeping of sheep and the need for good dogs to protect them. "You, my brethren," said he, addressing the parishioners, "you have a good dog of a *curé*!"

To prove how honour resides in him who honours rather than in him who is honoured, he said: "For example, when I meet my cousin, the good president Boulanger here, he makes me a reverence: but the reverence resides in him." In order to please M. Talon, the advocate-general, who was among his hearers, he said, speaking of Cicero: "Cicero, my brethren, was a great advocate-general."

From the Catholic point of view concerning the Eucharist, he could not have uttered a greater piece of foolishness than that which he did once in preaching on the Blessed Sacrament: "Now enough of this," he said. "For the physicians say, '*Omnis saturatio mala, panis autem pessima*': all repletion is bad, but that of bread is worst of all'."

He once began a sermon thus: "Hay of the Pope, hay of



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the King, hay of the Queen, hay of His Eminence the Cardinal, hay of you, hay of myself, all flesh is as grass and withereth."

He made the soldiers of Holofernes speak thus, after they had seen Judith: "Comrades, who is there amongst you, after seeing such fair women, *tam delectas mulieres*, who will not be desirous of bursting the barricade?"

And I have heard him preaching on the Transfiguration: "This took place," he said, "upon a mountain. I don't know what it is that mountains have done to God, but when He speaks with Moses, it is on a mountain: He nowhere showed him more than His back, and talked to him like a lady in a mask. And when He gave forth the Law, it was on a mountain again. The sacrifice of Abraham: a mountain again. The sacrifice of Our Lord: once again on a mountain. He will do nothing miraculous except on these mountains. So the Transfiguration is not likely to be a matter of a valley."

Seeing people crowded right up on to the altar, when he entered the pulpit, he said: "Behold the prophecy is accomplished: *super altare vitulos*."

He was preaching once in a convent of Carmelites on the chapel of which a thunderbolt had fallen without one of them being hurt. "Ah!" said he, "see what a blessing of God is here! If the thunderbolt had fallen on the kitchen, not one would have escaped!" There is a saying about "Carmelites in the kitchen."

Talking of romances he used to say: "It's all in vain my making ladies leave off reading them: as soon as my back's turned, their noses are in them."

"Paradise," he said, "is like a town. But it is a town like La Rochelle: it cannot be taken without block-and-tackle."

Speaking of David, he said that when he entered into Paradise, the Lord God, seeing him coming from far off, said: "Who is this?" And then, when he was nearer: "Why! It is My good servant David! Come along, come along, give Me your arm!" On the feast of the Ascension, describing the reception given to Jesus Christ in Heaven, he said that God said to David: "Have all the music ready: here is My Son coming!"

Once he invented letters-patent for the King of Nineveh: *We, Ninus, etc., to all the citizens and habitants whatsoever of our good city of Nineveh, make known by these presents that, on the counsel given to Us by our right trusty and well-beloved Master Jonas, that God, etc., hereby have ordained and do ordain that, etc., and whereas the aforesaid Master Jonas is the prophet of the afore-*



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said God, etc. Ten times there were "the aforesaid Jonas" and "the aforesaid God."

During Lent one day he compared charity to Jacob's ladder, and declared that it was not a ladder of oak or of ash, but that the first rung was *herring*, the second *cod*, and so on, naming all the meats of Lent, "which," he added, "should be sent to the convent of the Augustinians."

Preaching before some nuns who had pressed him to give them a sermon, he said to them: "Well, here I am! Because I'm *Boulangier*, you imagine I always have bread ready baked. But you do not think how many things I have to do." He began to recount to them all his occupations. Later, he compared a girl entering into religion to a ball of wool ready for the spinning. "A novice," he said, "is like a piece of elder-wood or paper on which you begin to wind the first needlefuls; but, however well it may be done, there is always one little breach that can never be stopped."

At Poitiers the Jesuits beseeched him to preach on Saint Ignatius, and he had a mind to rap them over the knuckles. He invented a dialogue between God and the saint, who was asking God for a place for his order. "I know not where to put you," said the Lord. "All the deserts are already taken up with Saint Benedict and Saint Bruno. . . ." He carried on a conversation of all the places occupied by the principal orders. "Just put us down," said Ignatius, "where there is something to take, and leave us to do the rest." On his way out, he said to a friend of his: "I would only preach here *after* dinner, for I knew quite well that otherwise they would have given me very poor cheer."

Another time, at Paris, he gave some more food for reflection to the Jesuits, on a similar occasion. "Christianity," he said, "is like a great salad. The nations are its leaves; the salt, the vinegar, these are the tribulations and the doctors: *vos estis sal terræ*; and the oil, this is the good Jesuit fathers. Is there anything more soothing than a good Jesuit father? Go to confession elsewhere, and the priest will say to you: 'If you persist in these ways, you will be damned.' But a Jesuit will soften everything. And then, however little the spot of oil that falls upon a dress, it will spread, and before you have noticed it will make a great mark: and so, put a good Jesuit father in a province, and very soon 'twill be covered with them." The Jesuits complained to him in person of what he had said: "I am extremely sorry, fathers," he said to them. "But I let myself

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be carried away. I did not know what to say to you. Now look, in four days' time it is the feast of our founder, Saint Augustine. Come and preach in our church, and say whatever you choose: I shall not be in the least angry."

One day he learned that Mme de La Trimouille was present at his sermon *incognito*. He was speaking of the prodigal son, and set out to provide him with a train which was exactly that of the Duchess. "He had," said he, "half a dozen splendid dapple-grey horses, a fine carriage with red velvet and trimmings of gold, a grand cloth over it, coats of arms in plenty, a crowd of pages, and a host of lackeys in yellow livery with trimmings of black and white."

He said that Paradise was a great city. "There is a *Martyrs' Street*, and a *Confessors' Street*; but there's no *Virgins' Street*: that is only a little blind alley, and a very narrow one, a very narrow one!"

"A Catholic," he said once, "does six times more on a piece of work than a Huguenot. Your Huguenot goes slowly, like his psalms, *Lift up your hearts*, and so on. But a Catholic will sing:

*Go call my Robinette,  
And bid her come to me, etc.,*

And as he said this, he made the action of one using a file. The story, as I have heard, comes from Sedan, where Du Moulin said to a gunsmith who was singing *Go call my Robinette*, "You would do better to sing a psalm or two." To which the gunsmith replied, "But look how fast my file goes when I sing *Robinette*. Do you see? And look how slowly it goes when I sing *Lift up your hearts*."

Speaking of *Hosanna*, he said that the children were up in a tree: "I cannot tell you its name for the moment, but I will later on." After his sermon was over, he said: "Brethren, that tree I was speaking of—it was a sycamore."

"The Gospel," he said once, "is a gentle law. Jesus Christ has told us it, and we must believe it." At that moment a couple of Jesuits came in. "Wait!" he said. "Here are two of the companions of Jesus just come in. Ask them if it is not true." This calls to my mind a certain Du Four, who, during the Huguenot wars, came upon some Jesuits on horseback, and asked them who they were. "We belong," they answered, "to the regiment of Jesus."

"Yes, I know it, my brave captain," he said. "But it's

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infantry. On foot, my fathers, on foot!" And he took their horses away.

Preaching on the patience of God, he said: "God waits His time for very long before He strikes. He threatens, but He strikes not. It is like the huntsman you see there on that tapestry. For perhaps a hundred years he has been pointing his spear at that stag. But still he does not strike, and perhaps there are not four finger-breadths between them."

He used to say that no one had ever prayed to God so much as did Saint Joseph, for the Child Jesus served him as an apprentice, and so he was for ever saying to Him: "Give me this, please; now give me that; now bring me that auger, please."

"God wants peace," he said in the time of Cardinal Richelieu. "Yes, God wants peace, the King wants it, the Queen wants it, but the Devil doesn't!"

## DANIEL DU MOUSTIER



PAINTED in crayon, Du Moustier's portraits were only heads, and smaller than life-size. He knew Italian and Spanish. I think he was fond of reading, and had a goodly number of books. He was a small man, almost always with a skullcap on his ears, with an inborn weakness for women, foul in his speech, but a good fellow and a man of worth. He was lodged in the galleries of the Louvre as a craftsman of fame,

but it was his manner of living and talking that attracted people there rather than his works. His working-room was curious. On the staircase there stood a large pair of horns, and underneath the inscription: *Behold Your Own!* On his books was written: *The Devil fly away with borrowers of books!*

There was a writing-tablet on which he had written: *The Tablet of Fools*. Father Arnoul, the King's confessor, who was a pompous Jesuit, asked him once who these fools were. "Look inside," he said, "you'll find yourself there." Another Jesuit found that he was included, and having asked why, without telling who he himself was, received the answer from Du Moustier, who was storming, for he had no love for the Jesuits: "Because he said that Henry the Fourth had been nourished on steel biscuits!" Talking about books, he used himself to tell of a feat at a bookseller's at the Pont Neuf, which was simply thieving—but there are many people who think that stealing books is not stealing, so long as they do not sell them again afterwards. He spied for the moment when this bookseller was not in his shop, and then picked up a certain volume which he had long been looking for. Most of those he had, I think, had been given to him.

He knew by heart more than half of two folio volumes of the two Protestant ministers, Aubertin and Le Faucher, on the matter of the Eucharist, and he had painted them, and another as well named Daillé. Du Moustier was a Catholic only for effect.

He had a small separate room, full of the *Postures* of Aretino.



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Moreover, he knew all the bawdy epigrams in the French tongue. I met a cousin-german of his at Rome, of the same calling, who also knew a thousand verses of that kind.

For physicians he had no greater love than for the Jesuits. "The magnificent butchers of Nature," he called them.

Nicolas de Verdun, the president of the parliament, was eager to see him, and one of his friends offered to bring him. "I'm not blind and I'm not a child," he said. "I shall go by myself." He went. The president was giving audience to a great many persons, but at last he said: "I have a headache," and every one was asked to withdraw. There was only Du Moustier left; he said that he wished to speak to M. the president, who had been desirous of seeing him. So he came and had himself announced as Du Moustier. "You?" said the president. "M. Du Moustier? You are a very good-looking man for M. Du Moustier." The latter looked round to see if no one could hear him, and then, going near to M. de Verdun, he said: "I'm a better-looking man for Du Moustier than you are for the president." (He had a crooked mouth.) "Ah!" exclaimed the president. "Now I recognise that it's really you!" And they talked together for two hours in the most familiar way possible.

When he was painting, he used to let his sitters do as they pleased. Only sometimes would he say: "Turn round." He made them better looking than they really were, and gave this excuse: "They are foolish enough to think that they are like my drawings of them, and pay me all the better."

He had painted M. de Gordes, captain of the body-guards. This was done at the command of the late King. "Otherwise," said Du Moustier, "I could never have brought myself to do it: he's far too ugly." He called him "the devil's younger brother."

Once when he was at the house of M. d'Orléans, Du Pleix, the historian, came, and M. d'Orléans paid him several compliments on his history. "There is only this man here," said Du Pleix, pointing to Du Moustier, "who is an enemy of mine." "An enemy of yours!" exclaimed Du Moustier. "You have done me no injury, nor any good either. But in very truth, I could not suffer that you, being a creature of our Queen Margaret, should tear her in pieces as you do. She is of the royal house too. If I had credit in France, I would have you chastised. And then, you are going to aver that formerly in France all men were perverted, and only married when they had wearied of that."

Under the portrait of Mlle de Rohan he had put: *The*

## DANIEL DU MOUSTIER

*Princess Gloriette*, and under that of the Comte de Harcourt: *The Paragon of Younger Princes*. Beneath that of a certain Mme de la Grillière, he had written: *She has only forgotten to pay*. There is a Flemish painter named Vaillant, of Lille, who works in crayon like him, and, when he was not paid, used to draw a sort of grille over their portraits, and say that he was keeping them in prison until they paid their debts.

The finest adventure that befell him was when the Cardinal Barberini, having come as legate to France during the pontificate of his uncle, had the curiosity to come and see Du Moustier's room, and Du Moustier himself. Innocent the Tenth, then Monsignor Pamphilio, was at that time datary and the chief of the legate's suite. He accompanied him to Du Moustier's, and, seeing on the table a copy of the *History of the Council of Trent* in the superb London edition, said within himself: "Well, it's a nice thing that a man like this should have such a rare book." And he took it and put it beneath his cassock, thinking that he had not been noticed. But the little man, who had one eye on the look-out, saw quite well what the datary had done, and, in a fury, said to the legate that "he was extremely obliged for the honour that His Eminence had done him, but it was shameful that he should have thieves in his train." And forthwith, seizing Pamphilio by the shoulders, he threw him out, calling him "the burgomaster of Sodom," and taking the book from him.

Later, when Pamphilio was made Pope, Du Moustier was told that the Pope would excommunicate him and that he would turn as black as charcoal. "He will give me the greatest pleasure," said he. "I am too white on the head as it is." Malherbe said much the same once to M. de Bellegarde. And the Marshal de Roquelaure before them had the same idea; Henry the Fourth said one day to him: "But how comes it that now that I am King of a peaceful France, and have everything I could desire, I have no appetite, whilst in Béarn, when I hadn't a crust to put my teeth into, I had a raging hunger?" "The fact is," said the Marshal, "that you were then excommunicated: there's nothing like it for giving an appetite." "But if the Pope had known that," said the King, "he would excommunicate you." "He would do me a great honour," said Roquelaure, "for I am beginning to turn very white, and I should then be as black as I was in my youth."

On the death of Du Moustier, the chancellor, at the instigation of the Jesuits, had all books against them which were in his possession bought up and burned.

## MARGUERITE DE VALOIS



IF Queen Marguerite I shall say nothing that is not to be found in her *Memoirs*, or in those which M. de Peiresc left to M. Dupuy. She was beautiful in her youth, except for her cheeks being somewhat pendulous, and her having too long a face. Never was there anyone with more of a taste for gallantry. She had a kind of paper with its margins covered with trophies of love. This was the paper she used for her love letters. She spoke *phébus*<sup>1</sup> according to the fashion of the time, but she had a deal of wit. There is a piece of hers remaining, which she entitled *La Ruelle mal assortie*, where can be seen the style of her gallantries.

She used to wear a kind of great hoop under her dress, with pockets all around it, in each of which she put a box containing the heart of one of her dead lovers, for she was careful, as each one came to die, to have his heart embalmed. This hoop hung every night on a hook, fixed with a padlock, behind the headpiece of her bed.

She became disgustingly fat, and as this became more pronounced, she had her skirts fashioned much longer than they need be, and her sleeves in proportion. Her head was dressed with blond hair, of the fairness of tow bleached on grass. She had turned bald early, and to remedy this she had big fair-headed footmen who were shorn from time to time. She always kept some of this hair in her pocket, for fear of being in want of it, and in order to improve her figure she had herself fitted with pieces of tin on both sides of her body to widen the span of her shoulders. There was many a door through which she could never pass.

Towards the end of her days she loved a musician named Villars. This fellow always had to have his breeches turned up and stockings attached, although nobody wore them thus any more. He was vulgarly called "King Margot." She had



## MARGUERITE DE VALOIS

several bastard children, one of whom, it is said, survived and became a Capuchin. The existence of "King Margot" did not in the least prevent the good Queen from being very devout and having a wholesome fear of God in her heart, for she used to have a strange number of Masses and vespers said.

Apart from her craziness in love, she was highly reasonable. She would in no way consent to the dissolution of her marriage in favour of Mme de Beaufort. She had a lively mind and knew how to trim her sails to circumstances. She paid a thousand gentle flatteries to the late Queen-Mother, Marie de Medicis, and when M. de Souvray and M. de Pluvinel brought the late King to her, she cried out: "Ah, how beautiful he is! How fine of build! Happy indeed is the Chiron who has the rearing of this Achilles!" Pluvinel, who was scarcely more subtle of spirit than his horses (he was under-governor and chief of the great stables), said to M. de Souvray: "Did I not tell you that this wicked woman would fling some insult at us?" M. de Souvray himself was hardly more able a man. There were some verses made about this time called *Visions of the Court*, wherein it was said of him that "he had nothing of Chiron about him, save the hind-quarters."

Henry the Fourth used sometimes to visit Queen Marguerite and grumbled because the Queen-Mother did not go forward far enough to greet her at the first visit. During her meals she always had some men of letters to discourse. Pitard, who has written on morals, was of her household, and she made him talk quite often.

The late King once conceived the dancing of a ballet of the old Court, wherein, amongst other persons represented, there was shown Queen Marguerite with the ridiculous figure she affected in her last days. This scheme was not very justifiable in itself: there ought at least to have been mercy for the daughter of so many kings.

And talking of ballets: once there was one being danced at her house, and the Duchesse de Retz begged her to give orders that only those specially invited should be admitted, so that the spectacle could be witnessed in comfort. A neighbour of Queen Marguerite's, Mlle Loiseau by name, a pretty woman of very gallant reputation, was clever enough to find entry. The moment the Duchesse saw her, she flew in a temper, and went to beg a favour of the Queen: to wit, that, as punishment of this woman, she should be allowed to put one single small question to her. The Queen advised her to do nothing of the



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kind, and told her that Mlle Loiseau<sup>2</sup> had a beak to peck with and claws to scratch with. But the Duchesse was obstinate, and at last she was given leave. Accordingly Mlle Loiseau was bidden to approach, which she did with a very deliberate air, and the Duchesse, who was herself of gallant reputation, said to her: "Mademoiselle, I should like to ask you a question—can you tell me whether *birds* have horns?" "Yes, madame: owls<sup>3</sup> have!" The Queen heard this, and burst into laughter, saying to the Duchesse: "Well! Wouldn't you have done better to believe me?"

I have heard one very pleasing tale told of Queen Marguerite. A Gascon gentleman of the name of Salignac, when she was still young, fell wildly in love with her, but she had no such feeling for him. One day when he reproached her with her ingratitude, she said: "Well, as for that, what would you do to show me your love?"

"What is there I would not do?" answered he.

"Would you go so far as taking poison?"

"Yes, provided you allowed me to expire at your feet!"

"Well, you shall," she answered.

A day was fixed, and she caused to be prepared for him a draught of opening physic. He gulped it down, and she shut him up in a closet, after vowing to come to him before the poison took effect. And there she left him for two good hours. . . . This gentleman, I think, has since been ambassador in Turkey.

<sup>1</sup> The name given to a style of euphuistic expression then much in vogue.

<sup>2</sup> = *Bird*.

<sup>3</sup> *Duc* = horned-owl.

## NINON DE L'ENCLOS



HE father of Ninon de l'Enclos was a follower of M. d'Elbeuf, and a good player on the lute. She herself was still very small when her father was obliged to flee France for having slain Chaban, in circumstances that might pass for an assassination, for the other had his foot still in the doorway when l'Enclos thrust his sword into him.

During his absence the girl became quite big. She was still only thirteen when, seeing every one in tears at a sermon on the Passion, she said: "What can they be thinking of? *Qu'importa que muera se ressuscitan?*" (What matter if I die if one rises again?) This was a Spanish song that was current at the time, in praise of the eyes of a fair lady. Her mother heard of it and saw that she was rewarded with a sharp reprimand from a Jesuit. She has confessed to me that since then she saw that religions were nothing but imagination, and nothing was true in all that. As she had lively spirits, played well upon the lute, and danced admirably, especially the sarabande, the ladies of the neighbourhood (it was the Marais) had her often in their company. She never had any great measure of beauty, but she had always much pleasantness.

Saint-Étienne was the first who told her fine tales. He had great liberties in that. The mother thought that he would marry Ninon, but in the end the matter came to an end, not, it is said, without her coming into harm's way. Afterwards the Chevalier de Raré was infatuated with her. It is said that once when she had been forbidden to speak with him, she saw him passing along the street, whereupon she ran down to the door and talked with him. A beggar interrupted them annoyingly, and she had nothing to give him. But she handed him her handkerchief, which had lace on it, and said: "Here! Take this and leave us in peace!"

Nevertheless, Coulon pushed forward his fortune, for he had

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a mind for her too. I think that he treated with the mother at Mesnil-Cornuel. Mme Coulon disclosed the whole mystery, and after this all honest women, or those who so called themselves, threw Ninon aside and saw her no more. Coulon raised his mask and openly maintained her, giving her five hundred *livres* a month, which, they say, he continued to give her until 1650, throughout eight or nine years, although there were differences between them. Aubijoux, some time afterwards, was associated with Coulon, and also contributed his share.

The first man she fell in love with was the late M. de Chastillon, who was killed at Charenton. He was then only d'Andelot. She wrote to him, and gave him an assignation. He went there. But as he was a faithless fellow, he soon left her. She deemed this treatment insufferable; although, as you will see from what follows, she was herself rather of a humour to leave than to be left; and she made complaint to la Moussaye, who made peace betwixt them and brought the fugitive back to her. It has been said that, in order to avenge herself, she had suffered herself to take a malady wherewith she peppered him so thoroughly that it was long before he could be restored: he had a delicate blood and caught the illness with great ease. This perhaps saved his life, for if he had not been thus disabled, he would have been at the battle of Honnecourt and no doubt would have paid with his life. In succession she had lovers in plenty, but nevertheless the subsidies of Coulon did not dry up.

Seigny and Rambouillet have been her lovers, by the quarter. She had a son by Meret, and one by Miossens.

When Charleval pressed her to accord him the ultimate favours, she said to him: "Await my caprice, sir!" He was her first "martyr": never could he have anything from her, no more than could Brancas. But what surprised me most was the case of the late Moreau, son of the civil lieutenant: he was most amiable: and she always wanted him for a friend, but he died without his ever receiving a favour. Her lovers were distinguished into three classes: the "payers," for whom she cared scarcely anything, and suffered only until she had gathered enough to enable her to dispense with them; the "martyrs"; and the "favourites." She used to say that she liked men of a fair complexion well, but that they were not such good lovers as dark men. In 1648 she took a journey to Lyons, some saying it was just a whim, others that it was to have herself secretly treated for some disorder. She said it was her purpose to retire, and in fact she put herself into a convent. There

the Cardinal of Lyons fell victim to her pleasing humours, and committed a number of follies for her sake.

The heart of a certain brother of Perrachon was pierced through and through by her, and without asking anything of her, he begged her to permit his visiting her sometimes, and his giving her a house that could be worth quite eight thousand crowns. But as he afterwards made claim to things which she was unwilling to grant him, one fine morning she restored his generosity to him, for she was not self-seeking.

On her return she determined that she would yield herself only to those who gave her pleasure, and told them so, or wrote it to them. She had Sevigny, though he was married, for three months or thereabouts, without his spending on her more than a ring of trifling value. She wrote to him playfully: "I think I shall love you for three months: for me, that is infinity." Charleval, having found this youth with her, drew near and whispered in the fair one's ear: "My dear one, here is somebody who look like being one of your *caprices*!" And after this her passing lovers were called her *caprices*, and she would say, for instance: "I'm at my twentieth *caprice*," meaning her twentieth lover. When she was tired of Sevigny she told him so, and replaced him with Rambouillet, for another three months. While her passion lasted no one but he saw her. Other people went to her house in great numbers, but it was only for conversation and sometimes for supper, for she had quite a tolerable table always. Her house was passably furnished, and she had always a very smart carriage.

Vassé succeeded Rambouillet. She took money from this one, for he was a very rich man. He did not cease to pay when his term was over, but like Coulon and Aubijoux he took no advantages save when the fancy took her.

Fourreau, a stout fellow, the son of Mme Larcher, acted as her banker; he had but one talent, and that was an admirable knowledge of the virtues of meat. She drew notes of credit on him: *M. Fourreau will pay . . .* etc. It is believed that he had hardly anything out of this.

Charleval, a certain M. d'Elbene and Miossens, have mainly helped to make her an unbeliever. She declares that there is no harm in what she does, makes profession of having no belief in anything, boasts that in an illness, when she thought she was at death's door, she kept her courage constant, and only received the sacraments out of a sense of propriety. They have made her assume an air of saying and deciding matters with a philosopher's



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authority: but her reading is confined to Montaigne, and she decides everything according to her whim. In her letters there is a certain fire, but everything in them is very disordered. She compels the respect of all who frequent her house, and would not suffer the biggest wig of all the Court to laugh at anyone, whoever it might be.

Coulon and she quarrelled, because she left the Marais for the Saint-Germain quarter, where Aubijoux had his lodging. The late Moreau, the young son of the civil lieutenant, was then wildly aflame for her; in her presence he was as if before the Queen: he paid, but it is not known whether he had her favours in return. I have heard it said by neighbours that his lackey always read his master's letter as he went into the lady's house, and her reply afterwards as he came away. She said one day to Rambouillet: "Tell me, is so-and-so handsome? For I'm greatly in need of some relish." She did this quite as an honest person, for she was not given to excess and but rarely hazarded any danger of getting with child.

During the Lent of 1651, some persons of the Court used to eat meat at her house quite frequently, and by an unlucky chance a bone was thrown out of the window on to a priest of Saint-Sulpice who happened to be passing. This priest went and made a great fuss with the *curé*, and added, as an additional trifle, that in there two men had been slain, as well as there being meat consumed quite publicly. The *curé* laid a complaint before the bailiff of the abbey of Saint-Germain, who was a rascal. Ninon, being warned of this, sent M. de Candale and M. de Mortemar to speak to the bailiff, and he received them with civility.

In the following summer, she found herself during a sermon beside a certain Mme Paget, wife of a master of petitions. This woman took great pleasure in chatting with her, and asked M. du Pin, the treasurer, who was with her, who she might be: "That is Mme d'Argencour, of Brittany," he told her. "She is bringing a suit before the courts here." He was making a quip over the name "*Argencour*,"<sup>1</sup> but the lady believed him and said to Ninon: "You are bringing an action, then, madame? I shall help you in it. I should be vastly pleased to help the cause of anyone so charming as yourself." Ninon bit her lips from fear of laughing. At this moment Bois-Robert happened to greet her, and Mme Paget, who was herself a lady of gallantry, said: "How do you come to know that man?" "Madame," she answered, "I am a neighbour of his. He lodges in the quarter."

"Ah! I shall never forgive him for having left our quarter for someone called Ninon, for a wretch of that sort."

"Ah, madame!" said Ninon, a little confused, "one must not believe everything that is said round the town: perhaps she is an honest girl. Perhaps they could say as much of you and me: gossip spares nobody."

On the way out, Bois-Robert came up to Mme Paget, and said: "Well, you have been having a pleasant chat with Ninon." And so here was the lady in a fury with du Pin, and Ninon as well. But none the less she had found her so agreeable that du Pin took the risk of bringing Ninon to the garden of Thevenin, the oculist, at the Porte de Richelieu, where the persons of the neighbourhood took their promenade. Mme Paget, who is the wife of Mme Thevenin's nephew, was there, and she again had converse with Ninon.

One day when hard words were being said against Bois-Robert, in Ninon's presence, over his partiality for handsome lads: "Indeed," he said, "it is not fitting to talk of these things in the presence of mademoiselle." "Put that nonsense out of your head," said she. "I am not such a woman as you may think."

Villarseaux is the last lover she had. In order to see him more easily, and to avoid being in Paris (this was in 1652), she went into the Vexin, to the house of a gentleman of quality named Varicarville, who is rich and entertains very well: but he is an odd character, especially in his foods, for he will eat nothing that has had life in it, not from physical aversion (like a gentleman of the Beauce named d'Auteuil, who could never be deceived on that point, for his stomach turned at once), but from some turn of his imagination. He has no great beliefs, any more than she had. One day they were closeted together for discussion. They were asked what they were doing there. "We are trying," said she, "to reduce our belief to articles. We have made some progress, and another time we shall go on with the work in good earnest."

Once during his passion, Villarseaux noticed from his window, for he lodged purposely over against her, that she had a candle burning. He sent over to ask whether she was being bled, but she answered no, and he then concluded that she was writing to some rival. He was seized with jealousy, and wanted to go and talk with her. In this wild access, thinking that he was taking up his hat, he rammed a silver water-jug on to his head, and with such force that it could only with difficulty be

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removed from him. She did not give him satisfaction, and he fell dangerously ill. Whereupon she was so affected that she cut off all her hair, which was of great beauty, and sent it to him, to let him see that she would not go out, nor would she even receive anyone at her house. This sacrifice cured his sickness. The fever left him immediately. Learning which, Ninon went to him, lay down in his bed, and they remained abed together for eight whole days.

She had two children by Villarseaux. "She is growing old, and turning constant," people said. She must have been thirty.

Two years afterwards, a tall and very handsome youth named Des Mousseaux, hailing from Beauvais, made her acquaintance at the comedy. He had returned from Sweden, where the Queen, on account of his handsome appearance, had made him captain of her guards—later she was obliged to take the post from him, on other Frenchmen declaring that he was not of gentle birth. Before that he had been in Candia, where he had borne arms for the Venetians. Well, having made her acquaintance, he went to see her. She was in bed. "Who are you?" she asked. "You are mighty bold to come to see me without someone to introduce you."

"I have no name," he said.

"And whence do you come?"

"I am from Picardy." (She hated Picards.)

"And where were you brought up?"

"In Candia."

"Lord! what a fellow is here! May you not be a swindler of some sort? Pierrot! Take care I am not robbed. I don't know who you are. I must have someone as a reference."

"I can give you Bois-Robert."

"I don't need that, nor do you either."

"Then I can give you Roquelaure," he went on.

"He is too much of a Gascon." (Note that he knew them only by sight.)

"But when I do have a reference, what would come of it?"

"We should see. You would pass some time here, for I am fickle-tempered. Pierrot would serve you."

"But I have nothing," he said. "I must be maintained."

"How much do you want?"

"One pistole a day."

"Come, come," she said, "I'll give you twenty pence."

Then he turned back on what he had said, and gave the name of Rambouillet, whom he did know.

## NINON DE L'ENCLOS

"Ah, well," said she, "I'll take him as a reference."

Whereupon they separated. Later this youth gave himself to M. de Noailles.

Villarseaux's intrigue was a source of much chagrin to his wife. Bois-Robert says that once he went to Villarseaux's, for he was his host in Paris, and there the children's tutor was anxious to show him how well they were instructed. He asked one of them: "*Quis fuit primus monarcha?*"—"Nembrot."—" *Quem virum habuit Semiramis?*"—"Ninum." Whereupon Mme de Villarseaux lost her temper against the pedagogue. "Really," she said to him, "you might well dispense with teaching them improprieties like that." And she declared that it was an insult to her to pronounce that name under her roof!

Villarseaux in 1656 became jealous of the Marshal d'Albret, who, having been unable to effect anything at Mlle de Guerchy's, the famous courtesan, whose house was opposite Ninon's, crossed the gutter, and made love to Ninon for the second time. He boasted that he was rid of her for always.

In the *Memoirs of the Regency* will be told the story of the persecution of poor Ninon by the pietists, and the rest of her adventures.

[*Addendum.*] It was Mme de Grammont, a mischievous prude, who was the cause of the Queen-Mother's having her put into the charge of the Madelonettes. (Her husband the Marshal used to say of her that she could give a good start to Beelzebub himself.) Mme de Vendôme had the execution of the order. The accusation was that she was fostering impiety amongst the youth of the Court. Afterwards it was reported that all the Court gallants wanted to invest the house of the Madelonettes, and a guard was sent to patrol it all through the night. Another time, it was declared that certain noted cavaliers, from a neighbouring house, had taken the height of the walls of the convent, etc. So much stir was caused that she had to be removed from thence, but only on condition that she passed a certain time in a convent at Lagny. There so many people went to see her, that she put a fortune into the pocket of the host at the sign of the "Royal Sword."

In 1671 she took a fancy for a youth of my acquaintance, and one day when they were in a carriage together, she noticed that the young man was glancing out at all the women who passed by. "Ha!" she exclaimed, "you have a mighty roving eye," and at the same time she gave him a sound slap. The fact is



that she was no longer young, and was grown distrustful of her own powers.

A certain Abbé who called himself the Abbé de Pons, a great hypocrite, who played the man of quality and was nothing but the son of a provincial hat-maker, served her pretty well. He was a queer fellow, who from nothing had found for himself a revenue of six or seven thousand *livres*. He is the original of Tartuffe, for one day he declared his passion to her, having become infatuated with her. In dealing with his plight, he told her that she must not be astonished, for even the greatest saints had not been immune from the troubles of the flesh, that Saint Paul was a man of affections, and that the Blessed Francis de Sales had not been able to keep free from them.

And this calls to mind the Comtesse de la Suze, who, in the last days of her life, conceived a passion for Jesus. She pictured Him to herself as a tall youth, dark in complexion and extremely handsome. Ninon remarked to her that she thought He was fair. "Not at all, my dear," she answered, "you are wrong there: I know from my own eyes that He was dark!"

<sup>1</sup> *Anglice*, "Silvercourt."

## BOIS-ROBERT



HE family name of Bois-Robert is Metel. He is the son of a procurator of Rouen (an advocate, he called his father in one letter). The father was a Huguenot, and he himself was one likewise. He practised at the bar at Rouen. One day, when he was about to plead, a procuress of the town came to warn him that a certain girl accused him of having two children by her. He proceeded with his pleading, and afterwards went to defend himself, but having had word that the petty judge, before whom he had been summoned, wanted to have him arrested, he made his escape, came to Paris, and attached himself to Cardinal du Perron, then to Cardinal Richelieu. At first the latter had no liking for him, and several times rounded on his people for not ridding him of this man. "Ah, monsieur," said Bois-Robert to him, for he was always a cringing fellow, "you willingly allow the dogs to eat the crumbs that fall from your table. Am I not worth so much as a dog?"

Bois-Robert, in order to keep himself alive at Court, thought of an ingenious invention. He asked all the great seigneurs for their help in forming a library for himself. He took with him a bookseller, who received what was given, and sold it to him, averaging a certain sum as his benefice. He confessed later that he had swindled in this fashion to the extent of five or six thousand francs. They did not dare to put down the story openly in *Francion*,<sup>1</sup> but it was there set forth as having been a musician who asked to make a cabinet of all kinds of musical instruments.

He became a canon of Saint Ouen at Rouen, but was imprudent enough to make mock in some way of the chapter; but they obliged him to make a kind of formal apology in presence of all the canons.

Mlle de Toucy, now the wife of the Marshal de la Mothe, fell sick in the abbey of Saint Amand at Rouen, of which her aunt

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was the abbess. Bois-Robert, as a canon of Notre-Dame, promised the invalid that the bells of the cathedral church of the town would not be rung at all on Lady Day. But he could not have this carried out. So next day he sent some verses on the subject to Mlle de Toucy, wherein he said that Mlle de Beuvron (now Mme d'Arpajon), her rival in beauty, had used her influence as daughter of the governor of the old palace to prevent the chapter granting this favour to the lady; she hoped that, this illness continuing, her charms would diminish. The canons were foolish enough to lose their tempers against Bois-Robert: he was put under interdict; he appealed to the secular court, and in the end the chapter were told that they were bringing themselves into ridicule, and the interdict was raised.

He says that about then there was a proposal to play in a certain quarter of Rouen a tragedy on *The Death of Abel*. A woman came to ask that her son should take part, and said that she would furnish all that was wanted. All the characters were already cast, but the offer was valuable, and someone had the idea of giving him the part of Abel's Blood! He was put into a large bag of crimson satin, and was rolled from behind the stage, and he cried: "Vengeance! Vengeance!"

He tells, again, how once he made a journey to Rome, and having there saluted with a reverence that was almost prostrate a certain Cardinal Scaglia, he received no salute in response. He imagined that the honour of the nation was at stake, especially as he had two armed attendants behind him. Accordingly, the first time that he met this Cardinal he pulled down his hat and stared him straight in the face without saluting him. The Cardinal, in his wrath, sent his men running after him, but he made his escape into a church. His Eminence excused himself for the first occasion on the ground of his poor eyesight, and said, of the second, *quel coglion l'havia vituperato*. He had to capitulate, and he got off with having to salute the Cardinal for the future very humbly.

At that time there was a certain gentleman of Brittany in Rome, who was possessed by such a hatred for priests, and especially for Cardinals, that when he took a coachman it was always on condition that he would not draw up in front of them. They all promised this, but they all failed to obey; and he himself used to relieve himself when the carriage stopped. The Cardinals merely laughed, and every one pointed him out. Not content with this, he sent for the *curé* of his village, enticing him with fine promises, and when he had come to Rome, intimidated

him so much that he forced him into the place of chief of his armed attendants, with a kind of short cassock that barely reached his knees. Complaints were made to the ambassador of France, and he summoned this crazy master. "Sir," said he, "the fact is that I thought I could hardly humiliate the priests more than by making one of them my armed servant, and since they take it so, I shall make him the least of my men. It has cost me two hundred crowns to bring him here, and I shall take good care that the money has not been spent in vain!" In the end they were forced to get the priest to make good his escape.

One day when he was stricken badly with the gout, Boileau happened to meet his lackey. "How is your master?" he asked him. "Suffering like one that is damned, sir," he replied. "Does he swear badly then?" "Aye, sir," replied the lackey frankly, "'tis the only consolation he has in his pain."

Bois-Robert went over to England with M. and Mme de Chevreuse, on the occasion of the marriage of Madame, the Princess Henrietta Maria, in order to pick up something. He fell ill there, and wrote an elegy wherein he spoke of England as a "barbarous clime." Rashly he showed this to Mme de Chevreuse, who, as senseless as himself, went and told Lord Holland and Lord Carlisle that he had composed an elegy, and then she asked for it to show to them. He answered that he had not got it, and that when he did have it, she knew quite well that he ought not to have it. "Ah!" she said to them, "you can't guess why it is that he won't give it us. It is because in it he speaks of England as 'a barbarous clime.'" Lord Carlisle did not heed this very much, but Lord Holland, who had pretensions as a gallant, threw the matter in Bois-Robert's face the first time he saw him, and even in the presence of Mme de Chevreuse. Bois-Robert excused himself, saying that any place in which he had been ill he would call "barbarous," and that in like circumstances he would have said so of the terrestrial paradise. "But since I have recovered, and your King has been gracious enough to send me three hundred gold pieces, I find the climate much more agreeable."

Lord Holland, hearing these words, exclaimed: "It was well said!" But the other was infuriated. On the way back, they accompanied Mme de Chevreuse. A few miles out of London, as they ascended a hill on the banks of the Thames, every one had to be on foot on account of the road being very rough. "Heavens!" cried Bois-Robert, "'tis a splendid country, my



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lady!" "But a 'barbarous clime,' none the less," grumbled Lord Holland, who had that always gnawing at his heart.

Bois-Robert had purchased four nags for himself. He got Mme Chevreuse to ask permission of the Duke of Buckingham, the high admiral, to let them pass into France. Buckingham could not resist inserting on the passport, after the words "and four horses," this addition: "*to pull him so much the faster out of this barbarous clime.*" As Bois-Robert was once reproaching Mme de Chevreuse for this, she answered him: "But really, it is not the greatest offence I did you. I once made you mimic Lord Holland when the King of England and he were concealed behind a tapestry."

Once Bois-Robert was well installed at Cardinal Richelieu's, he set himself to serve all whom he could: he is very officious. He had presented the Cardinal with the *Panegyric* of Gombauld, which the Cardinal took, and, having it placed beside his bed, remarked: "I shall wake up to-night, and shall have it read to me." It was no purpose of Bois-Robert's, still less of Gombauld, that a certain apothecary lad, who slept in His Eminence's room, should read this work. So Bois-Robert slipped in quietly, and took it. When the Cardinal awoke in the night, he could not find the *Panegyric* anywhere. He sent to see whether Bois-Robert was asleep, and was told no. Whereupon Bois-Robert came down, confessed everything, and added that he had purposely not gone to bed. He then read the verses, which delighted the Cardinal extremely.

When the Academy was founded, Bois-Robert included therein a good many figure-heads. "Bois-Robert's foundlings" they were called. By this means he had pensions given them. He calls himself, in a printed epistle (I know not which), for his volume of epistles is his best achievement, "the Champion of the Afflicted Muses," and he often sent allowances to these poor devils of authors, reimbursing himself at leisure.

The Marshal de Vitry, having been put into the Bastille, sent for Bois-Robert to ask him to dine, provided him with good cheer, and made him promise to bring certain matters to the Cardinal's notice. In the evening, Bois-Robert entered His Eminence's apartment. "Ah, here comes '*le Bois*'!" said the Cardinal, "here comes '*le Bois*'!" (He called him thus on account of M. de Châteauneuf, who wanted Bois-Robert to help him with certain ladies of his acquaintance, having granted him under seal a certain duty on *wood* coming from Normandy, although this had been refused a hundred times before.) "Well,

## BOIS-ROBERT

'*le Bois*,' what news?" For Bois-Robert used to amuse him with telling him all the gossip he had heard.

"Monseigneur," said he, "I shall tell you first that I have had the best cheer in the world to-day. You will not guess where. In the Bastille! In M. de Vitry's room there."

"Oh, yes!" said the Cardinal.

"And Monseigneur," the other went on, "you could not believe how learned he has become! He has proved to me out of passages from the Fathers, that striking a bishop is not a crime."

"Ah, *le Bois*!" pursued the Cardinal. "Are you the King's censor then? The King has condemned his action, and desires him to be punished for it." (Note that M. de Bordeaux was then on better terms with the Cardinal than ever he was.) "Come, you are playing at being a minister. I consider it insolence."

"You are right, Monseigneur. Punish me, ordain what you will against me, if ever I speak of matters of state again."

And then, to draw him away from this kind of talk, he said: "But Monseigneur, I have been charged to tell you——"

"But are these state affairs?"

"No, they are not state affairs: merely this—that the Marshal de Vitry will give such-and-such a sum as dowry to his daughter, and that you should do him the honour of bestowing on her in marriage whomsoever you may choose."

"Very fine, *le Bois*!"

"Monseigneur," said Bois-Robert, so as to turn the conversation, "you did me the honour of entrusting me with a certain commission: I have done this, and this." And he told him all the details of it. "And wait, Monseigneur, I am further charged to tell you that M. de Vitry has a grown son, well built, well nourished, whom he offers you to make use of as you please."

"Ah, *le Bois*!"

"Monseigneur, my third commission was to——" And he told him of I know not what order given to him.

"This rogue," said the Cardinal, "will tell me everything without my managing to be angry with him!"

Citois, the physician to the Cardinal, and Bois-Robert used to play into each other's hands. Once at Ruel, Bois-Robert fell into the Cardinal's ill-favour for something about which he had shown overmuch zeal. His Eminence, tired of the conversation of someone who had wearied him very much, asked Citois: "Who is in there?" "There is only poor Bois-

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Robert," said Citois. "I came upon him in the park. He was going to throw himself into the lake, and would have, if I had not prevented him." "Fetch him here," said the Cardinal. Bois-Robert came, and told him several stories. They were better friends than ever. Also, as the *History of the Academy* tells, Citois used always to say to the Cardinal: "All my physic will be of no avail, unless a little of Bois-Robert is included in it."

On one occasion he made the Cardinal take a certain page in spite of himself. The Cardinal was more fastidious in these appointments than the King himself, and would only have the sons of a count or a marquis. A president of the parliament of Dijon wanted to place his son thus, and had the matter mentioned by Bois-Robert, but the Cardinal rejected the offer. Bois-Robert, however, did not cease to write that the lad, as worthy a boy as could be found, should be sent. He came. Bois-Robert said to the Cardinal: "Monseigneur, the page you promised me to take has arrived."

"I? Promised?"

"Yes, Monseigneur."

"I never had a thought of it at all!"

"Oh, Monseigneur, speak softly. He is there. If he heard you he would be in despair."

"I? Did I promise you?"

"Yes, Monseigneur. Do you not remember how on such-and-such a day so-and-so came to pay his respects to you?" And in the end he was constrained, by Bois-Robert's effrontery, to take the boy.

On the other hand, if he served some handsomely, he did bad turns to others. Desmarest complains bitterly of his ways. He declares that when reading to the Cardinal Costar's *Remarks on the Odes of Godeau and Chapelain*, at a passage where the author compares with the stanzas of these gentlemen ten or twelve lines from a piece where the Cardinal is praised highly, His Eminence asked whose these were. Bois-Robert answered that they were by Marbeuf, whereas they were Desmarest's. He was afraid of Desmarest, whom Bautru had introduced to the Cardinal's household, and who, being a man of wide comprehension and well-stored mind, was very much what the Cardinal required. But he was not the sort of man to raise a laugh, and Bois-Robert always had his proper function left intact. But another time he did much worse, for, with the malice of a seasoned courtier, he took it into his head to tell the Cardinal that his guards were



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not content with having free admission for themselves to the comedy, but that they took people there as well. "Aye," said the Cardinal, who wanted to have the affection of his guards, "are there complaints of my guards then?" Bois-Robert retired, and, passing through the guard-room, he told them that Desmarest had said this and that against them. After which the guards used to jostle Desmarest's valet at the ballets and comedies of his own master, and told him that it was because he belonged to M. Desmarest. The latter complained to Manse, the lieutenant of the guards, who asked the men the reason of this. It was then known that it was all a calumny of Bois-Robert's.

For the Cardinal's diversion, and at the same time to placate his jealousy against *The Cid*, Bois-Robert had a burlesque performance of this piece given before him by the lackeys and scullions. Among other things, at the place where Don Diego says to his son:

*Hast thou no heart, Rodrigo ?*

Rodrigo had to reply:

*I have but diamonds !*

No one could tell a story more amusingly than he, there is no better comedian in the world. In person, he is handsome. He says that once, just as a trial, the Cardinal ordered the actor Mondory and him to hold forth together on a passionate theme, and that the Cardinal held that he had excelled the most famous comedian, perhaps, who ever existed since Roscius.

None the less he was once disgraced for a long time, and profited little from his restoration to favour. This is how I have heard the story told.

A rehearsal was being held, in the small hall, of the great comedy which the Cardinal was having performed, and Bois-Robert, who had orders to invite, for its judging, only actors, actresses and authors, gave admission to the little Saint-Amour Frerelot, a pretty wench who had once been for a time a member of Mondory's troupe. Just as a start was being made, M. d'Orléans entered. They had not dared to refuse him admittance, and the Cardinal was furious. This little flibbertigibbet could not sit still. She pushed up her head-dress, and did everything she could to catch the attention of M. d'Orléans. A few days later the comedy was performed. Bois-Robert and the Chevalier Desroches had orders for the inviting of the ladies;



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several ladies who were uninvited, and among them some rather doubtful ones, entered under the titles of the Marquise of So-and-so, or the Comtesse of Such-and-such. Two gentlemen who were receiving them at the door, seeing that their names were on the list, and that they were properly escorted, passed them on to two others, who led them to the President Vignier and M. de Chartres-Valençay, later the Archbishop of Rheims, who were charged with giving them their places. (The Cardinal employed priests and bishops for inviting and placing at the comedy. Later, he gave tickets.)

Well, the King had wind of this, and, being always delighted to administer a pin-prick to His Eminence, said to him, in the presence of M. d'Orléans: "Well, there were plenty of fine feathers at your comedy the other day."

"Indeed there were!" exclaimed M. d'Orléans, "for in the small hall, where I had precious great difficulty in getting in myself, there was the little Saint-Amour, one of the greatest strumpets of all Paris!"

The Cardinal was stupefied. He was furious. He said nothing, except: "And this is how I am served!" Coming away, he told his captain of the guards: "Cavoie, the Saint-Amour girl was at the rehearsal the other day."

"She did not enter by the door I had to keep," he answered. But instantly, Palevoisin, a gentleman of Touraine, kinsman of the Bishop of Nantes, Beauveu, an enemy of Bois-Robert, told the Cardinal: "Monseigneur, she came in by the door where I was. But it was M. de Bois-Robert who had her admitted."

Bois-Robert, knowing nothing of all this, was met by the chancellor, who told him: "His Eminence is in high dudgeon with you. Keep out of his way." But at the same moment the Cardinal sent for him. There was no one there but Mme d'Aiguillon, who had no love for him, and M. de Chavigny, who liked him well enough. With a frown, the Cardinal addressed him: "Bois-Robert" (not '*le Bois*' this time!), "on what grounds did you have a strumpet given admittance to the rehearsal the other day?"

"Monseigneur," he answered, "I know her only as an actress. I have never set eyes on her except on the stage, where Your Eminence pointed her out to me." (Yet he admits that on that morning she had been to see him to secure an admission.) "Besides, I know nothing about her: has information about one's life and morals to be given to be an actress?"

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For myself, I think they're all pretty bad, and I don't think there ever were any otherwise."

"If that is all," said the Cardinal to his niece, "I do not see that there is any crime."

Bois-Robert wept, and made all the protestations you can imagine. But the Cardinal, still hot with the thought of what the King had said, said to him: "You have scandalised His Majesty. Withdraw."

Bois-Robert took to his bed. All the Court and all the kinsmen of the Cardinal visited him. The Marshal de Gramont went to see him several times, and on the last visit said to him: "If you could keep silence, I could tell you a secret. But not a word of it. On Sunday you'll be back in favour. The Cardinal is to see the King on Saturday, and he will take up your case with him." Sunday came, and the Abbé de Beaumont came to see him. As soon as he saw him, Bois-Robert said: "Here I am, in favour again!" But the Abbé came up to him with sighs, and pulling a very long face, for he did not like him. (He, Grave and Palevoisin were all jealous of Bois-Robert; perhaps he had also played tricks on them.) And at last the Abbé told him that the King had refused to listen to His Eminence, and had said to him: "Bois-Robert is a disgrace to your household." Bois-Robert then had orders to retire, either to his abbey (it is called Châtillon), or to Rouen, where he held a canonry. He chose Rouen.

All this trouble, however, came from deeper causes. Cinq-Mars was desirous of ruining La Chesnaye, who was, as I have said elsewhere, the Cardinal's spy, and turned for this end to Bois-Robert. In a private conversation at Saint-Germain he told Bois-Robert that he had always thought highly of him, and that his father, Marshal d'Effiat, had always had a liking for him. But up to the present, said Cinq-Mars, Bois-Robert had only been feathering nests for sparrows and swallows, but now he must work for some bigger game; he ought to catch hold of a big prize; it was time to be thinking of his fortune, and he begged him to aid him. "La Chesnaye," he added, "is playing me false. He has had a long conversation with the Cardinal in the garden; and on coming away from that the Cardinal treated me like a schoolboy. You can easily tell me who has introduced La Chesnaye to the Cardinal's circle, and who are his friends in the house: I want to ruin them." And then he was carried away somewhat, and said that the Cardinal was treating him ill, and that, by God. . . . And he stopped without saying any

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more. Observing this, Bois-Robert could well have wished that he had had no converse with Cinq-Mars, and after promising him to find out who were the friends of La Chesnaye, went off to Mme Lansac, the governess of the Dauphin, and asked her counsel. She was of opinion that he ought to say a word to the Cardinal, but he had no mind to do so, saying that it was only a young man's freak and that he would never have the determination to injure the Cardinal. Later, Cinq-Mars sought everywhere for Bois-Robert, but the latter kept out of his way. He took it into his head that Bois-Robert had played him false, so he spoke ill of him to the King, and made use of everything that had ever been said against Bois-Robert. Whence it came that the King declared Bois-Robert to be a dishonour to his master's house.

Here is the principal reason on which the King took his stand. Bois-Robert once disclosed to the Cardinal that Saint-Georges, the governor of the Pont-de-l'Arche, was in the habit of taking a certain toll on each vessel that came up, and that these vessels were dubbed *cardinals*. Whereupon Saint-Georges was dismissed, and, out of revenge, declared that Bois-Robert had dishonoured his son, who was one of the Cardinal's pages. Palevoisin had done worse, for he had said the same thing before fourteen persons in the antechamber. Bois-Robert heard of this, and told the Marshal de Gramont. "Sir," he said, "let us have the page here." "He is in bed," they were told. "Make him get up." And the page, who knew nothing of the calumny spread by his father, declared that he would give the lie, and death as well, to anyone who had said such a thing. The Marshal de Gramont exerted himself so that Bois-Robert contented himself with Palevoisin saying, in the full wardrobe chamber, that all who had made such accusations against Bois-Robert had lied. Whence came Palevoisin's detestation of him.

When Bois-Robert was at Rouen, the Marshal de Guiche, on going thither as lieutenant of the King for Normandy, asked the Cardinal whether he would object to his seeing Bois-Robert. "You will give me pleasure," said the Cardinal. Bois-Robert entertained the Marshal magnificently, and after dinner lost six-score pistoles to him, for he cannot keep himself from play and plays like a child.

Afterwards the Cardinal made his journey to Perpignan, and when he was sick at Narbonne, Citois said to him: "I do not know what more I can give you, unless it be three drachms of Bois-Robert after meals." "It is not yet time for that, M. Citois," answered the Cardinal.



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After the death of Cinq-Mars, every one spoke on Bois-Robert's behalf. Cardinal Mazarin wrote to him: "You can go to Paris, if you have business there." Bois-Robert went thither, and while waiting for His Eminence lost twenty-two thousand crowns which he had in ready money. When the Cardinal had arrived, Mazarin wrote to Bois-Robert again: "Come and ask for me on a certain day, and if I turn out to be in the Cardinal's room, come and find me." Bois-Robert went. The Cardinal embraced him, with sobs, for he loved those whom he believed to be fond of him. Bois-Robert, who saw his master weeping, could not on this occasion, contrary to his wont, muster up a single tear. He had the idea of feigning a seizure, and Cardinal Mazarin, who was anxious to help him, exclaimed: "Look at the poor man! He's choking. He is so overcome that he cannot even weep. Sometimes one is suffocated by less than that. Quick, a surgeon!" And Bois-Robert was bled, although he was as well as anyone. Three big basins of blood were drawn. All the people who were envious of him hastened to embrace him, but the Cardinal died only nineteen days later. Bois-Robert says that the only good thing that Mazarin ever did for him was to get three basins of blood out of him.

A few years afterwards, Bois-Robert had a great dispute with M. de La Vrillière, the secretary of state, who had removed from the list of pensions a brother of Bois-Robert's named d'Ouille, a kind of engineer. Bois-Robert had him beseeched by every one to restore his name, and his friends told him: "We have shaken him a little. Go and see him." Bois-Robert went, and was received by La Vrillière, who was rather a churl, with an oath: "Good God, sir! You will oblige me by stopping people from pestering me everywhere about your brother, a quite undeserving fellow." In telling this story Bois-Robert used to say: "I knew that quite well, he had no need to tell me, I did not go there to learn that." But what annoyed Bois-Robert chiefly was that this man had formerly paid court to him: "Ah, sir," he said to him, "I never thought that ministers of state swore as you do. In very truth, such language would suit a carter much better than it does you. Come, sir, my brother will be restored to the list despite you and your snarlings!" And forthwith he went to see Cardinal Mazarin, to whom he declared that he had no claim to make of him save this one, but that this was a matter of honour. The Cardinal granted his promise. None the less, in his resentment, Bois-



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Robert composed an amusing satire against La Vrillière, whom he calls Tirsis.

He repeated it to every one. Some remembered one part, others another. M. de La Vrillière had word of it, and M. de Chavigny warned the Abbé that La Vrillière was going to go to the Palais Royal to lay a complaint. Bois-Robert took a step in advance of him with the Marshal de Gramont. They went together to the Cardinal, who could hardly contain his laughter: "Monseigneur," said Bois-Robert, "they are not directed against M. de La Vrillière, these verses of mine. I have been reading the *Characters* of Theophrastus, and I wished, in pure imitation, to write the character of a bad minister." "You see the injustice," said the Marshal. "Fancy accusing poor Bois-Robert of that!" He was made to repeat the verses in their entirety, and La Vrillière came. "Monseigneur," he cried. "He has besmirched me, he has flung a bottle of ink in my face!" "Monsieur de La Vrillière," said the Cardinal, "it is not you at all: it is the *Characters* of Theophrastus."

Nevertheless, he did not restore d'Ouville to the list. The Cardinal in the end had him restored, for Bois-Robert waited for him every day in his wardrobe room. "Monseigneur," he said to him, "M. de La Vrillière says that he will not do it, even if the Queen commanded him to. After that he must be ascending the throne."

During this turmoil, the late M. d'Emery maliciously invited Bois-Robert to dine with him, and put him opposite La Vrillière, quizzing the grimaces of his son-in-law the while. Penon, La Vrillière's clerk, was slow to deliver the warrant, but Bois-Robert let him catch sight of four pistoles in his hand. Immediately the warrant appeared. Bois-Robert, as soon as he had it, put back the pistoles in his own pocket. "Ah, my good sir," he said, "I think I can't be sober! Money for you! What an idea! I beg your pardon, I wasn't thinking what I was doing."

"In the end," said Bois-Robert to the Cardinal, to whom he told the story, "my impudence proved to be greater than his." For three years d'Ouville received his payments, after which La Vrillière was again minded to remove him from the list. But Bois-Robert had the insolence to inform him that he would print the satire. And the other dared not do it. "He's only a rascal," said Bois-Robert, "he ought to have had me thrashed." And indeed it is always a matter of astonishment to me that the Archbishop of Bordeaux should have been beaten on two occasions, but Bois-Robert never once. (After the death of

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Cardinal Richelieu, Bois-Robert was twice set upon with fists at Rouen: the first time by the Abbé de Turseville, who, like himself, was a canon of Saint Ouen, and the other time at the comedy—I know not by whom.)

Once when Bois-Robert went to the Petit-Luxembourg, Mme Sauvoy, wife of the steward of Mme d'Aiguillon, said to him when she saw him: "Ah, M. de Bois-Robert, I have certain bones to pick with you." (Bois-Robert, to make mock of her, flung himself forthwith at her feet.) "You are reputed everywhere to be impious—an atheist in fact!"

"Ah, madame," he replied, "one must not believe all that one hears. Now, I have often been told, I have, that you were the most brazen of strumpets!"

"Come, sir!" she interrupted him. "Come, what are you saying?"

"Madame," he went on, "I protest to you that I never believed a word of it." The whole household was delighted to see the mortification of this insolent woman.

At a performance of one of his pieces, the actors used a bad word which was not in the text. "Ah!" he cried from the box where he was seated, "these scoundrels will have me turned out of the Academy!"

Bois-Robert, always the good courtier, was inspired to compose some verses against the Frondeurs. Never was there anyone so cringing. The coadjutor knew of this, and the first time he came to dine with him, said: "M. de Bois-Robert, will you repeat them to me?" "Very well, sir," said Bois-Robert. He spat, he blew his nose, and, with an air of absent-mindedness, he went over to the window. He looked out. Then he turned to the coadjutor. "Upon my word, sir," said he, "I shall do nothing of the kind. Your window is far too high up!"

He wanted to write a comedy which he called *The Miserly Father*. In certain passages, it was the story of the late President de Bercy and his son, who was formerly a spendthrift, but is now more avaricious than his father. He pretended that a woman, who had a beautiful daughter, used to ensnare the youth, on pretext of bringing suits. There was inserted the meeting of the president, in a notary's room, with his son, who was seeking money at high interest. "Ah, spendthrift! it is *you*!" cries the father. "Ah, 'tis *you*, old usurer!" cries the son. (A certain Du Boulay once found himself in this predicament at a notary's with his wife, who was lending out money at high interest on securities.)

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He had also incorporated the conversation of Ninon and Mme de Paget at a sermon, when this lady, who did not know Ninon, complained to her that Bois-Robert was anxious to leave her quarter to go to the Saint-Germain quarter, for the sake of somebody or other called Ninon. Ninon answered her: "One must not believe all that is said, madame. They might be saying the same sort of thing about you and me."

Bois-Robert, with his usual rashness, went and said here and there that it was Bercy whom he meant in the play. Bercy, who is a churlish fellow, was minded to take offence, and made an outcry instead of just laughing at it. Mme Paget likewise behaved foolishly, following this example. The King wanted the piece to be performed, and Bois-Robert wished him to ask for its production in the presence of the president. But he did not dare have it played. I think that M. de Matignon, Bercy's brother-in-law, asked this of him, or at least gave him to understand that he would not find it at all agreeable. The King wished to know why the play was never given; he said that the President de Bercy, who had launched so many onslaughts against the Fronde, would be offended (this was cajolery), and in this way had his court paid in his absence. Bercy thanked Bois-Robert for this.

He was always meeting with adventures on account of his comedies. In one of them he had put a countess named "*d'Ortie*" (nettle), not thinking that there was anyone of that name. Nevertheless, one fine day he saw a worthy man come in, who addressed him in a Gascon accent. "Sir," said he, "my name is d'Ortie." This astonished Bois-Robert. "You have put a countess of that name into your play." "Sir," said the Abbé, "I did not do it with any thought of offending you." "Far from my bearing you any grudge, sir, I am, on the contrary, obliged to you for having done me a service every time your piece has been performed. The King has had me summoned, and he knows my face far better than ever he did before." He was a lieutenant of the guard, and is now a captain. Bois-Robert has said since: "If I had thought that, I would have called her *Marquise de la Ronce*" (bramble). He was told: "But there is a *Marquise de la Ronce*, it would have been worse." His *Cassandra* is the best of his plays.

Bois-Robert, sick of an ancient malady of which he will never be cured, I mean the courtier's meanness, has demeaned himself a hundred times to the Cardinal, and then spoken ill of him. He always goes to visit the Queen. She has a steward named La



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Volière, who is the most capricious animal in the wide world, and took a dislike to the poor Abbé. One day he refused him admittance. "I shall enter in spite of you," said Bois-Robert, and, addressing some powerful noblemen who were coming along, said to them: "Take me in along with you, gentlemen." He entered, and on the way out, he sneered: "One for you, M. de la Volière!"

We must ever be returning to his theatrical pieces, since he wrote so many of them. He and Scarron and the brother of Corneille had all three imitated from the Spanish a play which is called *The Scholar of Salamanca*. The version of Corneille was rather behindhand, but the two others were completed. Mme de Brancas, whom Bois-Robert told of it, begged the Prince d'Harcourt to speak to the troupe of actors about it: they are deeply obliged to him, for he often has them to perform in the town. They wanted to play Scarron's version the first. The Prince threatened them with a thrashing if they affronted Bois-Robert in this fashion, and he, relating the adventure, said: "Upon my word, the Prince d'Harcourt took it all very heroically indeed!"

Once the Prince de Conti, during a performance of one of Bois-Robert's comedies, called out to him from the box where he was: "Monsieur de Bois-Robert, a mischievous piece!" Bois-Robert, who was on the stage, began calling out in a much louder voice: "Monseigneur, you are embarrassing me with these praises to my face!"

About that time the religious-minded at Court turned against Bois-Robert, and had him exiled as a man who ate meat in Lent, had no religion, and swore horribly when he gambled, which was true. But on his return, he could not resist saying that Mme de Mancini, who had made his peace for him, had only brought him back so that she could be paid forty pistoles which she had won off him.

Afterwards he was obliged to say Mass occasionally. Once at a midnight Mass Mme de Cornuel saw, when it came to the *Dominus vobiscum*, that it was Bois-Robert, and remarked to someone: "There! All my devotion's vanished!" Next day, when someone proposed taking her to hear a sermon, she replied: "I don't want to go. After finding Bois-Robert saying the Mass, I dare say I shall find Harlequin in the pulpit. I verily believe that his chasuble was made from a skirt of Ninon's." She repented her words, and they made it up between them. In the course of one year he had eight quarrels, and made eight



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reconciliations: he has no bitterness in him. M. Chapelin said: "Formerly I used to tremble for him, but nowadays, having seen him clamber out of so many holes, I fear nothing for him."

When someone was talking to him once about fabulous genealogies, he said: "For myself, I should like to have a descent for myself traced back to Metellus, for my name is Metel." "But," he was asked, "you cannot mean that your ancestor was Metellus Pius?"

He directed a satire against d'Olonne, Sablé-Bois-Dauphin, and Saint-Evremont, who were known as the *Côteaux* (hillsides). This name came from that fact that M. du Mans (Lavardin), who keeps a good table, used to complain bitterly of the fastidious tastes of these three gentlemen, and declared that in the whole of France there were only three hillsides whose wines they approved. This name of *Côteaux* stuck to them, and even spread as a term for those who are too delicate in their tastes and make a point of drawing over-nice shades in good cheer. In this satire there were some pleasing things: such as their remarks that for beauties it was well they should be things of one day to the next, but not so for cooks. Two of them he stung pretty sharply, namely, Sablé and Saint-Evremont, as men who found nothing good, and who never in their lives had given anyone so much as a glass of water. In time, they won him round, and made him throw his piece in the fire. I was forgetting the principal maxim of the *Côteaux*: it was, *never to eat sucking-pig*.

To show how little pains he took to hide his uncommon tastes, he used to say that Ninon wrote to him, speaking of the kindness shown her by the Madelonettes, where her pious friends had her put: "I think I shall follow your example, and begin to harbour some affection for my own sex." Bautru's porter once administered a sound kick to Bois-Robert's lackey. The Abbé was in a transport of rage over this. And people commented: "Yes, that's much more of an offence to him than to another. 'Tis not their faces that make these gentry's fortune."

With his wealth—for he has enough to allow him to travel always in his coach, although he has lost a great deal of it—he amuses himself with the composing of still more comedies, and, provided these are pleasing to the actors and the booksellers, he has no cares for aught else. He once cajoled a bookseller's wife into printing a hundred copies of four Spanish Novelas which he had turned into bad French. The Comte d'Estrées, second son of the Marshal, noticed that Bois-Robert used to talk of these

Novelas as of something of extreme beauty, and took it into his head to write him a long letter, in which, without giving his own name, he advised him of all the faults of language in the book. Bois-Robert imagined that this came from Saint-Evremont, author of the comedy of *The Academy*, and answered in a very sharp tone. Saint-Evremont replied that he desired no controversy with him: "not on account of your writing rather bad plays," he said, "and rather bad Novelas, but on account of the perpetual thoughtlessness wherewith God has endowed you, and which makes the Abbé de La Victoire say that you must be judged as if you were eight." Later Bois-Robert discovered the truth of the letter's source, and they were reconciled, the Comte and he. "He has done well," said Bois-Robert; "without that I would have reviled him."

Lately, at the Palace, he remarked with a laugh to a young councillor: "I am enchanted when I see France so well counselled." The young man was not confused, and said in the same tone: "And I am enchanted when I see the Church so well served."

In 1659, when the King went to Lyons, Bois-Robert generously lent three hundred pistoles to the Marquis de Richelieu, who had not a pennypiece to make this journey with. Contrary to his expectation, he was later repaid. The grand-master, knowing of his giving this money, laughed at him. "I am only doing," answered Bois-Robert, "what you ought to do. For my own part I shall always remember that he is the nephew of Cardinal Richelieu."

In 1661, at the time of the death of Cardinal Mazarin, a man from Nancy made inquiries, at the Palace, of the news-mongers, saying: "I beg you, gentlemen, to tell me whether it be true, what they tell us at Nancy: that Bois-Robert has turned Turk, and that the Grand Vizier has given him great revenues, with beautiful little boys for his pleasure, and that from there he has written to the atheists at Court, saying: 'As for you, gentlemen, you take pleasure in denying God a hundred times a day. But I have only denied him once, and find I am getting on very well.'"

Bois-Robert purchased a house in the country. And Providence directed that it should be a house of the name of *Villeloison*! He said himself that it was to entail on his nephews, who are real goslings, but, upon my word, it does not suit their uncle so ill! He died a year or two after this charming acquisition.

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He had sold his abbey of Châtillon to Lenet, M. le Prince's friend. He had frittered away nearly everything, except the acquisition I have just mentioned, and a bill for twelve thousand *livres* drawn on a man of affairs. He was playing once at the house of Paget, the master of the petitions, and was losing. In his excitement to have himself as the stake-holder, he said: "Don't be afraid of my going bankrupt: here's a note for four thousand crowns that owes nothing to anyone." Paget took it, and in its place gave him a written petition, which the other grasped. When going to bed, Bois-Robert recognised his blunder, and sent to the man of affairs to give him such information as was expedient, and, in a pair of ratteen trousers, went and made the devil of a noise at Paget's, who restored his note but refused ever to see him again.

Mme de Châtillon, his neighbour, was the chief cause of his being brought to make a truly Christian end. He said to those who surrounded him: "Forget the living Bois-Robert, and think only of Bois-Robert a-dying." When his confessor told him that God had pardoned greater sinners than he had been, Bois-Robert said: "Yes, father, there *are* greater. My host the Abbé de Villarceaux" (he had a grudge against him, because he had lost money to him) "is no doubt a greater sinner than I. Yet I do not despair of God's showing mercy towards him." Mme de Thoré said to him: "Contrition is a grace . . ." etc., etc. "Ah, madame, I wish you it, with all my heart!" He was close-fisted to the very end, and desired that his nephew should wear a coat which he left, instead of giving it to a needy valet of his.

He remarked: "I should rest content were I on as good terms with Our Lord as I was with Cardinal Richelieu."

When he was holding the crucifix, and asking pardon of God, he exclaimed: "Ah! The devil take that villainous soup I ate at d'Olonne's. There were onions in it, and that's what has made me ill." And then he went on: "It was Cardinal Richelieu who spoiled me. He was of no worth; 'twas he who turned me astray."

<sup>1</sup> The romance by Charles Sorel, 1622.

<sup>2</sup> Which one might Anglicise as *Goslington*.

## NOTES

Page 1. *Henry the Fourth.* Henry of Navarre, founder of the royal house of Bourbon, was born at Pau in 1553. As the Prince de Béarn, he fought with the Huguenots under his uncle, the Prince de Condé, and made a marriage, political rather than heartfelt, with Marguerite de Valois in 1572. He was named successor to the throne of France by Henry III, who died in 1589, but it was not until 1598, after much fighting and a profession of the Catholic faith (and a famous tag) that he was acknowledged King. Divorced from Marguerite, he married Marie de' Medici in 1600. He was murdered by the fanatical Ravaillac in May, 1610.

Page 10. *The Duc de Sully.* Maximilian de Béthune, Duc de Sully and Baron de Rosny, was born at Rosny, near Mantes, in 1559. He attached himself to Henry of Navarre in 1575, becoming one of his councillors in 1580. It was on his advice that Henry abjured Protestantism, although he himself remained faithful to the Huguenot doctrines. He became superintendent of finances in 1599, and was made Duc de Sully in 1606. No one had greater weight with Henry IV than Sully, but his influence ended with the King's reign. His later years were spent in virtual retirement and in writing his *Memoirs*, which appeared between 1634 and 1642. He died in 1641.

Page 16. *Louis the Thirteenth.* Louis XIII was the son of Henry IV and Marie de' Medici. He came to his father's throne under his mother's regency at the age of nine (1610), and married Anne of Austria in 1615. Before long his mother was exiled from Court, and for a time the Duc de Luynes was its dominant figure. But during the wars waged against the Huguenots in 1620, Richelieu won his earliest sovereignty over Louis, and his is the name which dominates the reign. Louis died in 1643, when his crown passed to his son, Louis XIV.

Page 28. *Monsieur d'Orléans.* Gaston Jean Baptiste de France, the Duc d'Orléans, was born in 1608, the younger son of Henry IV and Marie de' Medici. He was lieutenant-governor in 1630, but quarrelled with Richelieu, and in 1632 made open war on the King, Louis XIII. Pardoned after his defeat, he was none the less a conspirator once more in 1642, this time in the affair of Cinq-Mars and others, against the great Cardinal. But he recovered his old position after Louis's death, 1643, and moved along a path of ingenious inconstancy until his death in 1660.

Page 34. *Father Joseph.* François Leclerc du Tremblay, the Capuchin Father Joseph, was born in Paris in 1577. He became the special confidant of Richelieu, and played a very intricate part in the great Cardinal's manoeuvres and intrigues. "The Gray Eminence" died in 1638.

The affair at Loudun attracted much attention at the time. It was a case of alleged diabolic possession among the nuns of an Ursuline con-



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vent there during 1632. An examination of the whole story seems to indicate an outbreak of some form of infectious hysteria—and possibly it was exploited. But it ended in the burning alive (1634) of a priest named Urbain Grandier, who was implicated.

Page 37. *Sauvage*. Sauvage's *Gazettes* survive in isolated specimens, e.g., for 1632. Scarron makes mention of him in some verses of 1642. The Grenoble imposture took place in February, 1637.

Page 38. *Madame de Rambouillet*. Catherine de Vivonne, Marquise de Rambouillet, was born in 1588, and married in January 1600. She died in December 1665. Her literary name, "Arthénice," is an anagram of Catherine.

*Monsieur de Rambouillet*. Charles d'Angennes, Marquis de Rambouillet and de Pisani, was born about 1577, and died, after some years of blindness, in Paris in February 1652.

Page 50. *Madame de Montausier*. Julie Lucine d'Angennes, the daughter of M. and Mme de Rambouillet, was born in 1605, and married the Duc de Montausier (1610-1690) in 1645. She died in 1671.

Their daughter, in whom Tallemant takes such pleasure, was born in 1646, married the Duc d'Uzès in 1664, and died in 1695.

M. de Montausier was supposed to be the original of Alceste in Molière's *Le Misanthrope*. The compilation of the *Garland*, Jarry's masterpiece of calligraphy, was begun about 1632. The original passed, through the hands of the daughter just mentioned, into the possession of the Uzès family.

Page 54. *Madame de Montbazon*. Marie de Bretagne, daughter of Claude de Bretagne, Comte de Vertus, was born about 1610, and married Hercule de Rohan, Duc de Montbazon, in 1628. She was one of the most famous beauties of her day, and died in April 1657.

Page 58. *Monsieur de Montbazon*. Hercule de Rohan, Duc de Montbazon, was born in 1567. He served Henry III and then Henry IV, and was governor of Paris and the Ile de France under the latter. He died in Touraine in October 1654.

Page 60. *Cardinal Richelieu*. Armand Jean du Plessis, Bishop of Luçon, and Cardinal-Duke de Richelieu, was born at Paris on September 5th, 1585, and died there on December 4th, 1642.

Page 101. *Mademoiselle de Gournay*. Marie de Jars, *demoiselle* de Gournay, was born in Paris in 1565. The family retired after the death of her father to a somewhat cramped life at Gournay, in Picardy. She taught herself Latin and engaged in various and unexpected studies, even, it was said, in the search for the philosopher's stone. She made Montaigne's acquaintance in Paris in 1588, after a passionate admiration of the *Essays*. After his death she spent over a year at the Château de Montaigne, working on a folio edition of the *Essays*. Thereafter she lived in Paris,

## NOTES

enjoying the friendship of many distinguished persons. The early days of the French Academy often saw its members assembled at her house, and her works had a high reputation in their day. She died in 1645.

*Page 106. Bassompierre.* François de Bassompierre, Marquis d'Harouel, was born in 1679. He was early favoured by King Henry IV, and, after serving against the Turks in 1603, became commander of the Swiss Guards. Louis XIII continued the favour of his father, and made Bassompierre a marshal of France in 1622. He married Louise, Princess de Conti. Richelieu imprisoned him in 1631, and he remained in captivity until the Cardinal's death, more than eleven years later. He died in October, 1646, leaving some interesting *Memoirs*, published in 1665.

*Page 115. Cardinal de Retz.* Jean François Paul de Gondi was born at Montmirail in 1614. He became a leader of the Frondeurs in the civil war of 1649, and was nominated cardinal through the queen-regent. Imprisoned by Mazarin in 1652, he escaped in 1654 and was for several years an exile in Italy and the Low Countries. He died in philosophic retirement in 1679, leaving his remarkable *Memoirs*, first published in 1717.

*Page 123. La Fontaine.* It should be remembered that when this obviously incomplete picture of La Fontaine was sketched, the poet had published nothing but a translation of a play of Terence (1654). He was born in 1621, and the first six books of the *Fables* did not appear until 1668. The rest of these were issued in 1678. He died in 1695.

*Page 125. Pascal.* Blaise Pascal was born in June, 1623, and at first devoted himself to mathematical and physical research. After a carriage accident in 1654 he turned to the religious life and entered the Port Royal, the Jansenist centre. His pseudonymous *Provincial Letters* appeared in 1656, his even more famous *Pensées* in 1670, eight years after his death.

His father, Etienne, was born in 1588, and died in 1651. The performance before the Cardinal is placed in the year 1639. Blaise Pascal's calculating machine was granted a royal "privilege" in May, 1649.

*Page 128. The Chevalier de Roquelaure.* Antoine de Roquelaure was a son, one of eighteen children, of the Marshal de Roquelaure, the faithful adherent of Henry IV (1544-1625). He was thus a brother of Gaston de Roquelaure, famed for his *bons mots* (1615-1683). The blasphemous Chevalier's incarceration in the Bastille was during the spring of 1646. He died in Paris, piously, at the end of 1660.

*Page 131. Marion de l'Orme.* Marion de Lou, *demoiselle* de l'Orme was born about 1611. Like Ninon, she inspired a whole legend of beauty and gallantry: it was even maintained that she lived on, unknown, until 1741, and even later, "still trembling at the names of Richelieu, Buckingham and Cinq-Mars!" But as a matter of fact she died quite incontestably in 1650.

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*Page 136. Mademoiselle Paulet.* Angelique Paulet was born in 1592. She was the daughter of Charles Paulet, the inventor of a tax which came to be known as the *Paulette*. There is a vivid portraiture of Mlle Paulet's beauty in Mlle de Scudéry's *Grand Cyrus*, wherein she figures as Elize, and in this romance also there is an elaborated version of the story of the luckless M. Pontac. She died in 1651.

*Page 140. Father André.* André Boulanger was born in Paris in 1582. He was one of the most renowned "popular" preachers of his generation. A celebrated comparison of his was that of the four Doctors of the Church to the four Kings in a pack of cards. He died in 1657.

*Page 147. Du Moustier.* Daniel du Moustier (or Dumoutier) was born in Paris about 1575. His grandfather was Geoffroy, a miniature painter in the time of Francis I, and other members of the family were also painters. Many of Daniel's portraits are extant. He died in Paris in 1646.

*Page 150. Marguerite de Valois.* Daughter of Henry II and Catherine de Valois. She was born in 1553, and married Henry of Navarre at the age of nineteen. The marriage was dissolved in 1600 and Marguerite died fifteen years later. Her *Memoirs* were first published in 1648.

*Page 153. Ninon de l'Enclos.* Anne de l'Enclos was born in November 1620. The renown of her beauty, her wit and her loves was soon widespread. She lived on, with something of the glory of a living legend, until October 1705.

*Page 161. Bois-Robert.* François le Metel, Abbé de Bois-Robert, was born in 1597. He took orders, after a short legal career, in 1623, and about the same time was first brought to the notice of Richelieu, who soon adopted him as an especial favourite and a literary practitioner. He became the Abbot of Châtillon in 1638. It was by Bois-Robert's suggestion that Richelieu proceeded to the foundation of the *Académie Française* in 1635, and he was the first occupant of its twenty-sixth *fauteuil*. He served Mazarin after his great patron's death, and died himself on March 30th, 1662.

## BOOKS TO CONSULT

SIR EDMUND GOSSE's Zaharoff Lecture, "Talleyant des Réaux," 1925, published by the Oxford University Press, is an admirable short study of Tallemant's life and literary significance.

The full edition of the *Historiettes* in nine volumes, edited by A. Monmerqué and P. Paris, was published in Paris 1854-60.

SAINTE-BEUVE : *Talleyant et Bussy, ou le médisant bourgeois et le médisant de qualité*, in the *Causeries du Lundi*, 1857.

M. EMILE MAGNE is responsible for most of the discoveries concerning Tallemant des Réaux. His two books on this subject, elaborate reconstructions of the life of the time, are : *La Joyeuse Jeunesse de Tallemant des Réaux*, 1921, and *La Fin Troublée de Tallemant des Réaux*, 1922.



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